

A Dialogue
Concerning
Lords Supper.



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Concerning
Lords Supper.



A
DIALOGUE
BETWEEN A
Minister
AND HIS
PARISHIONER,
Concerning the
LORD'S SUPPER.

Principally designed for the Instruction
of those that never yet Received.
To which are annexed Three several
Discourses, *Of Love to God, to our
Neighbour, and to our very Enemies.*

By J. LAMBE, Rector of *Wheattham-*
stead in Hertfordshire, and Chaplain in
Ordinary to their Majesties.

L O N D O N,
Printed for *Walter Kettilby*, at the Bishop's
Head in *St. Paul's Church-yard*, 1690.

EXTRACT

A NEW

Ministry


PARLIAMENT

Containing the

FOR THE YEAR

Printed by the Printer of the House of Commons, at the Sign of the Royal Arms, in the Strand, near the Temple Church.

To the Right Worshipful
Sir John Garrard } *Kt. & Bt.*
Sir John Witteronge }

To the Worshipful, 
James Witteronge } *Esq;*
Godman Jenkins }
Edmund Smith }
Rich. Emerton } *Gent.*
Godman Jenkins }
Valen. Laurence }

SIRS,

Considering our frequent
Exhortations to the Peo-
ple, to come to the Holy
Sacrament, the many Motives, and
those especially from the benefits

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we receive thereby, so often inculcated and press'd upon them; and above all, considering the example of You that are the chief and leading Men, whose Wisdom they justly value, and have recourse to in most of their Affairs: it cannot but seem exceeding strange, that our Communions are so very thin. If we, at any time, desire them to give us a reason of their absence, they either decline the question; or, if we press it, they stop our mouth by saying they are not fit, and who will perswade them to eat and drink their own damnation? And thus they satisfy themselves with that excuse which is indeed an aggravation of their fault. The very truth is this,

DEDICATORY.

to the looser sort, the Sacrament, as all Religion, is a thing indifferent, that I do not say, despised; to many of those who are well inclined, (by reason of their crude and indigested notion of it) it seems a tremendous dreadful duty that they are afraid to assist in; and to others a mystery that is unintelligible: and thus the greatest restraint of impiety, the strongest bond of Universal Love to God and man, is deplorably neglected, to the prejudice of Christianity, and the great decay of Holiness. Wherefore to reform this grievous evil amongst us, (since the efficacy of Preaching in Country Parishes, is somewhat hindered, by reason of the

THE EPISTLE

inconstancy of our hearers, through the extremity of Weather, and other causes; and since such an effectual instruction of Families, that are scattered in considerable distances, and are continually employed in their affairs, is impracticable) I resolved with my self to digest the Nature, the Ends, the Benefits, and preparation to the Holy Sacrament in as easie a method, as familiar a Style, and as suitable to my Preaching as I could; that all pretences of ignorance, fear, or unfitness, may be remov'd for the time to come. And I humbly beg of you to favour the design, and joyn your influence upon the People, with my endeavours, that God may be

DEDICATORY.

be glorified, his Worship frequented, and our Souls, and the Souls of those that are under our care, that have any relation to us, or dependance upon us, may be saved: which is the constant Prayer and endeavour of

Sirs,

Your faithful Pastor,
and affectionate
humble Servant,

J. Lambe.

March 28.

1690.

Licensed,

Z. Isham.

Mar. 13. 16¹²/₁₀₀.

A
DIALOGUE
 Between a
MINISTER
 And His
PARISHIONER,
 Concerning the
HOLY SACRAMENT.

Parishioner. **S**IR, a good morning
 to you, I come to
 give you notice of a
 Christning to morrow at the Church,
 between eleven and twelve a Clock,
 if you please to be at home.

Minister. It is very well, you shall
 be sure to find me ready, by God's
 assistance, to do mine office : and I
 pray present my service to my neigh-
 bour

bour, and tell him I commend his Conformity, Zeal and Obedience in bringing his Child to Church; and I hope the benefit and decency thereof will invite the rest of my Neighbours to follow his example. But, I pray, advise him to keep his time, and get his Gossips in a readiness, that neither the Congregation, nor the Child may be detained.

Parish. Yes, Sir, yes, as for that matter, the Gossips are bespoke already; and for want of a better, I have promised to stand for one myself, and the rest are at hand.

Minist. 'Tis very well, but I must tell you one thing, the Church enjoins that no man stand as Godfather to a Child before he has received the Sacrament: and I am ashamed to tell you, you never received it of me, and I am afraid you never received it at all.

Parish. Truly; Sir, if that be the Law, my Neighbour must look him another Gossip; for it is a folly to lie, I never did receive. I never understood

derstood what it was you did, nor why you did it, nor what I should get by communicating with you. I have heard your self, and many others preach upon it very learnedly, as far as I know; sometimes exhorting us to come, sometimes pressing us to a careful preparation of our selves, before we presume to receive, lest the Sacrament should do us more hurt than good; sometimes upon one point, sometimes upon another that concerned it: but my memory is very slippery; indeed I cannot well understand a Sermon, and I remember it worse; but if I perfectly apprehended the meaning of the duty, no man should be more constant at the Sacrament than my self.

Min. I profess I am heartily sorry, as well for your Ignorance as neglect. But I am glad however, that you are willing to be informed; and if you think good to accept of my service, I will do the best I can to enlighten your mind, and assist your preparation.

Parish.

Parish. Ah, with all mine heart, but I shall never understand you, unless you give me leave to propose such Questions to you, as arise out of mine own mind.

Min. Do so, ask me what you will.

Par. If you please, then I will begin with what I see, and so proceed to enquire into the design and meaning of it. I observe then, that on *Easter* Day, and at other particular times in the Year, the Communion Table is cover'd with a linnen cloth, and furnished with a Patten of Bread, and Flaggons of Wine; I pray, Sir, what becomes of it, what does the Minister do with it?

Min. After the Service and Sermon are ended in the Church, the Minister goes up to the Communion-Table, and after a serious confession of sins, and several Prayers and Thanksgivings, together with the Charity of the Communicants, for the most part, first collected and offered up to God, and after a form of blessing or consecration of the Bread
and

and Wine, he deals to every Communicant a morsel of that Bread to eat; and then he delivers the Cup into their hands, that every one may drink a little of the Wine that is in it, as you may more particularly inform your self, by reading the publick Office for the Communion.

Par. Yes, this may easily be supposed, I believe as much; but I pray, Sir, give me leave to ask you, what the Design, the Intention and End of all this is?

Min. Ah, that indeed is the thing which is chiefly to be regarded. For you must not think that this is done for the sake of the Bread, the Wine, or the Company, as an ordinary friendly Computation; but it is an act of Religion, which we are obliged to celebrate in Obedience to our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, who has made and ordained this breaking of Bread, and drinking of Wine together, the most solemn Ordinance of the Christian Worship.

*S. Mat. 26.
S. L. k. 22.*

Par. To

Par. To eat and to drink together; the most solemn Ordinance of the Christian Worship ! how should that be ? surely there must be something farther in it, that does not appear to the eye, there must be a reason of this Religious action, that I at present do not apprehend, but am very desirous to be instructed in.

Min. Most certainly there is: for you know it is commonly called the *Sacrament*, and the principal reason of that, (as our Church hath taught us) is this, because the outward sign, that is to say, the whole action that is done before our eyes, by the express command of God, preserves in memory, represents and signifies some other thing that is invisible, some Historical passage of former times, some duty thereupon to be performed, together with the several advantages we shall certainly receive thereby, which are assured unto us, and conferr'd upon us, by the will and appointment of God, in the due Celebration and use thereof : and thus a
Sacrament

Sacrament is distinguished from a bare religious Ceremony of remembrance or instruction.

Par. I beseech you Sir, be more particular.

Min. I am very glad of your attention. Briefly then, our blessed Saviour (as you may read in the 22. of *St. Luke*, at the 19th. Verse) as He was eating the Passover with his Disciples, immediately before He was betrayed, set forth and represented to them His ensuing death upon the Cross, by breaking of Bread, and distributing the same unto them, saying, *Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you:* and by taking the Cup (full of Wine) and giving that also to them, saying, *This Cup is the New Testament in my blood;* or as Saint *Matthew* recites it, *This is my blood of* Matt. 26. *the New Testament which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins:* and at the same time commanded them, by the same most proper and natural signs of blessing and breaking of Bread, pouring out of Wine, and

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eating and drinking the same together, to continue a fresh remembrance of *Him*, and more particularly of His death, to the end of the World. *Do this in remembrance of me, v. 19.*

Par. Thus far I hope I understand you, the Death and Passion of our Blessed Saviour is that in especial manner which the outward Signs commemorate, exhibit, and refer to. But you said that this Holy Sacrament was more than a Religious Ceremony of *Remembrance*: and therefore I pray inform me in the full intent and farther signification of it.

Min. It is very well remembered; and if you observe the words of institution, which I but now recited, you will easily perceive that our Blessed Saviour appointed these Sacred Signs not only for a perpetual Remembrance of His Death and Passion, but also of the ends and reason of it, as His Death was the Seal or ratification of the New Testament, or Covenant of Grace, which God has entred into with Man, consisting
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principally in this, that our sins shall be forgiven, and our Souls shall be saved, through the satisfaction which our Saviour has made to God for us, if we on our part, believe His Gospel, rely upon His merits, and amend our lives. For so says our Saviour, *Take, eat, This is my Body*, there He appoints the Commemoration of His death. *Given for you*, there is the end and reason of it, *which is given for you*; Now, once for all, in substance and reality, and hereafter, to the end of the World, in the sign and figure, as often as you celebrate the Mystery. And again, *This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood*: the Covenant of Grace between God and us, which was sealed and ratified in the Death of our Saviour, is revived, renewed, and confirmed to every particular Person, in this his Holy Sacrament, that receives it as he ought to do. You are therefore to understand the Sacrament, as a display of the whole Religion of Christianity; God on his part signing and sealing his Cove-

nant of Pardon and Peace to us, and we on the other part, covenanting with God to perform the Conditions required of us, with all possible exactness for the time to come.

Par. I perceive then that the Holy Sacrament is a Remembrance of the Sufferings of our Blessed Saviour, together with the design and intention thereof, the Remission of our sins. That it is a confirmation of the Covenant of Grace on the part of God, that He will be reconciled unto us through the blood of his Son, which is therefore called the *blood of the Covenant*: and on our part, it is a Profession of our Faith in the Mediation of Christ, and a solemn obligation of our selves to perform the Conditions required of us. Now, I pray, Sir, give me leave to ask you, what those benefits and Graces are, which you said were assured unto us, and conferred upon us in the due Celebration of this Holy Sacrament?

Min. You may easily find out that your self, if you consider what has been
been

been said already concerning the nature of the Sacrament, and the end of its Institution. Is it understood as the Seal and Confirmation of the Covenant of Grace? Why then the benefits we receive thereby are no less than all the blessings and promises of that Covenant, which is so solemnly confirmed, and assured unto us: Namely, the pardon of our sins, upon Repentance, Grace and strength to persevere in a course of new Obedience, and Eternal Glory in the life to come. This *New Testament*, this Covenant of Grace, is sealed and delivered to every particular Person in the Holy Sacrament: all such Persons present, as believe the Gospel of our Saviour, rely upon his Merits, and Repent of their sins, are, at that very instant pardoned, if they persevere: So sure as they eat that Bread, and drink that Wine in Remembrance of our Saviour's death, so sure shall they partake of His *Body and Blood*, that is, of all the Blessings which were purchased for us by

His Death and Passion : and this is grounded upon the words of our Saviour, *Take, eat, This : i. e. this Bread,* which you are about to eat, *is my Body which is given for you ;* and *This Cup, i. e. this Wine in the Cup* which you are about to drink, *is my Blood of the New Testament.* They shall not only be the signs of your Redemption by my Death ; but they shall be the thing it self ; they shall be *my Body and Blood* : that is to say, the intention and end of my sufferings, pardon of sins, and Eternal life, are assured unto, and actually vested in all those, who worthily receive these outward signs. *For the Cup of Blessing which we bless,* says St. Paul, 1 Cor. 10. 16. *Is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ ?* Not only a Remembrance of his Body broken, but a Communion or a participation of the Body : by which, according to the fairest and most natural construction of the words, we can understand no less than

than this, that as we bodily and carnally partake of the Bread and Wine, which are the signs and representations of His Body that was broken, and His Blood that was shed for us; so Morally and Spiritually we shall also partake of the benefits, the intention and end of breaking his Body, and shedding *His* Blood, the Pardon of our sins, and the Salvation of our Souls, if we receive the same with such affections, and dispositions of mind, as we ought to do: and this our Church has taught us in her most Excellent and Comprehensive Catechism, *That the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received, by the faithful, in the Lord's Supper.* By these Visible signs, as by the Rod in your Copy-hold Courts, you have Livery and Seisin given you, of all the blessings purchased for you by the Body and Blood of Christ, under the Conditions of Fealty to the Lord, and the Customs, Rents, and Services of the Mannor.

Par. Methinks it is not so difficult to understand the nature of this Holy Sacrament, and the reason of its institution as I thought it was; I am heartily troubled that I have so long neglected it: I am convinced what an enemy I have been to my self, and am now resolved that I will never miss an opportunity of Receiving.

Min. But hold a little! You had best consider what you say, and what has been said to you. For as the most nourishing of meats, received into a sick and crazy stomach; instead of that wholesome juice, that strength and spirit which it contains in it self, and would certainly yield and give out to the body, does now but feed the diseases of it, and fill it fuller of evil humours; not for want of vertue in the food, but for want of proper dispositions in the Recipient. So also the Holy Eucharist, though it contains, and is ready to confer, those benefits and Graces I have informed you of; yet you must not think that it operates as a charm, by
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the repetition of certain words, or the punctual celebration of the Ceremony, (as you have already been instructed) but in a way that is Natural and Rational, that is to say, upon this Condition, that the mind of the Receiver be duly qualified and prepared. There is therefore more employed in this so solemn a Remembrance of our Saviour's Death and Passion, than it may be you are aware of. It will not be the Body and Blood of Christ to every one that receives the Elements of Bread and Wine, which are the signs thereof, but only to such as are *duly qualified and prepared* to receive them. God is ready to perform his part of the Covenant, if we have fulfilled, or are resolved to fulfil, the conditions which are required of us.

Par. I beseech you let me understand the utmost of my Duty, that I may prepare my self as I ought to do.

Min. I will so; and because the just and necessary preparation to any action whatsoever, depends upon,
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and is measured by the nature, the end, and design of the Action it self; therefore I shall only trouble you with such preparatory exercises, as you your self shall acknowledge to be fairly inferr'd from the nature of the Holy Sacrament, as I have explained it to you.

1. First then, Is the Communion a *Sacrament*? does the outward action represent and signifie the whole transaction of our Redemption. Begun in the Birth, continued in the Life and Preaching of our Saviour, and finished in his Death upon the Cross? Then a Religious Commemoration hereof, implyes, and supposes a sufficient explicit knowledge of that, which we so solemnly Commemorate; because the Knowledge of the Fact goes before the Remembrance or recollection of it, in the nature of the thing. It is necessary therefore, that you acquaint your self distinctly with the History of our Saviour's Life and Death, contained especially
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in the four Evangelists, before you can be qualified to receive.

Again, Do we understand the Holy Sacrament, not only as a bare external Ceremony of Remembrance, but as a confirmation of the Covenant of Grace, as the Seal of that Covenant, and all the Blessings of it to every Communicant that is willing to accept the terms: *This* Matt. 26. 26. (Bread) *is my body*, and *This* (Cup) *is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins*, or according to S. Luke, *This Cup is the New Testament in my blood*: or as Luk. 22. 19. S. Paul expresses it, *a Communion of the body and blood of the Lord*? then 1 Cor. 10. 16. this implies a competent knowledge, at least, of the grounds and principles of the Christian Faith. And therefore it is absolutely necessary that every Communicant be well informed :

First, In the miserable condition of all mankind, as well by reason of the corruption of our nature, as because of our many actual and obstinate

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nate transgressions, which expose us to the Anger and Justice of God, and to those grievous punishments, annexed to his Laws, which we are neither able to undergo nor avoid.

2. And Secondly, in the nature and conditions of our Saviour's Mediation between God and us, who, *by the will of God has sanctified us*, who has put us into a capacity of Renovation, Pardon, Mercy, and Eternal Life, *by the offering up of his Body once for all, who knew no sin himself, but was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God through him.*
- Heb. 10. 10. *Who therefore took our nature upon him, that he might be capable of bearing our sins in his own body.*
- 2 Cor. 5. 21. *In a word, who by his death and sufferings, according to the wonderful Council of God, to us unknown, has offered such a satisfaction to God, as with safety to the honour of his Laws, and the Justice of his Government, he has been pleased to accept of; and has thereupon abundantly assured us of his readiness to be reconciled*
- Heb. 9. 16. *1 Pet. 3. 18.*

In a word, who by his death and sufferings, according to the wonderful Council of God, to us unknown, has offered such a satisfaction to God, as with safety to the honour of his Laws, and the Justice of his Government, he has been pleased to accept of; and has thereupon abundantly assured us of his readiness to be reconciled

conciled to us. So that if any difference continue still between us, the reason thereof shall be wholly on our part. *For all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.* Col. 1. 21.
2 Cor. 5.
18.

That he hath now restored us all to a capacity of favour, Pardon and eternal Happiness, upon condition, that we believe and hope in his Mercy, through the merits of his Son ; Repent of all our past transgressions, and sincerely endeavour to govern our lives by the Laws of his Gospel for the time to come. That instead of a perfect and exact obedience, (which the best of us are not able to perform) the purity of our hearts, and the sincerity of our intentions shall be now accepted ; and all our manifold transgressions, through humane frailty, shall be now forgiven ; through the satisfaction and intercession of our Blessed Saviour. *That if we sin, as we all do, and repent and amend, as we all should do ; we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus* 1 Joh. 2. 1.
Christ the Righteous, and He is the
propi-

propitiation for our sins. We have one that will plead our cause, and urge a Right that repenting Sinners have to Pardon, because, by being made a curse, he has delivered us from the curse, that is, from the punishment of the Law; and is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us. And that all this blessed Mystery of our Redemption, through the Cross of Christ, is both signified and confirmed unto us in the Holy Sacrament. This is my Body which is given for you. This Cup is the New Testament in my blood. And therefore you cannot be qualified to receive, until you understand these Principles of the Christian Faith. You cannot be qualified to enter into Covenant with God, till you understand the contents and articles of the Indenture.

3. Again, Is the Sacrament a Recognition of your Christianity? Do you by partaking of the visible signs of our Saviour's death, by assisting in the solemn

solemn Ordinance of distinction, profess and own your self to be his disciple, (*as those who ate things offered to Idols, were understood to consent with the Sacrifices, to own and profess the heathen gods and worship?*) Does God by his Minister offer and confirm his Covenant of Pardon to us in the blood of Christ, and are we understood to consent with all our hearts, to accept the Conditions with all humility and gratitude, to enter into Covenant with God our selves, that we will perform the Conditions required of us? Then you cannot be worthy to receive, unless you steadfastly believe his Revelation, trust intirely in his Propositions, depend upon his Promises, and chearfully resign your self to be governed by his Laws. It is therefore absolutely necessary to examine well the steddiness of your Faith, the seriousness of your Repentance, the purity of your Intentions, and the sincerity of your Obedience, at least in serious resolution, for the time to come; since it is evident that
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1 Cor. 10.
18, 19, 20,
21, &c.

without these qualifications, you profane this Holy Ordinance, whilst you make profession solemnly of that Religion, which you neither understand, believe, nor practise.

1 Cor. 11.
26.

Par. Sir, I am clearly of your opinion, I think if we communicate in the most solemn Ordinance of our Religion, we certainly ought to understand it, believe it, and intend at least to practise it. But are we obliged whensoever we receive the Sacrament, to have the History, the Principles, and the Duties of our Religion distinctly in our minds? this seems to be very hard, and almost impossible.

Min. No surely; you mistake me very much. These ought to be considered and examined well, before you presume to present your self, or before you are admitted to the Holy Table: But when you are entered, confirmed, and settled in your Religion, there is no necessity of such a particular recollection: your Faith will become a habit, and, if you have no doubt of
any

any Article, you may boldly make profession of your Faith at any time : and if you are not conscious of any Vice you wilfully indulge, you may profess the sincerity of your heart, and your resolution of persevering in a course of universal righteousness, without a particular examination of your self upon the several duties of Christianity. The ordinary preparation, after you have been thoroughly instructed, and admitted to the Holy Table, is this ; Namely, first, to consider and weigh the doubts and scruples that are upon your mind concerning any Branch, or Article of your Religion, if any be, and clear them fully to your self by consideration, instruction, and advice. And secondly, to observe your own particular infirmities ; what those evils are to which you are most inclined, and which are aptest to prevail upon you, and are subdued with the greatest difficulty ; and how you may prevent their return for the time to come ? what business, what conversation, what occasion,

sion, what company are apt to expose you to temptation ? that so your humble resolutions and professions may be well considered, and perfectly sincere, and with particular respect to the present state of your Soul, with earnest desire to be better instructed, and reformed by the grace of God.

Par. This is but reasonable indeed, and now I hope I apprehend both the nature of the Sacrament, and the duty of the Communicant.

Min. I pray God enable you to perform it ; but there is one thing more that concerns our preparation, which must not be omitted, and that is this : Is the Sacrament the Death and Passion of our Lord exhibited in proper signs ? Is our Saviour slain before our eyes ? *Is his death shewed forth, represented to us till he come,* as St. Paul expresses it ? then we ought to raise in our minds such a feeling sense, such a sympathy, such passions, affections, and devotions, as the sight of such a stupendous passage would have stirred up, and excited in us, if we had been

been Spectators of it. Had we been the Disciples of our Saviour, as we now profess to be, and had we seen Him at his Trial, under his scourging, in his Agony, and on the Cross, should we not have adored and magnified the love of God, that He should send His only begotten Son into the world, to bear the punishment of *our sins*? should we not have been astonished at the love of our blessed Saviour, that He should be contented to divest himself of all his glory for our sakes, and humble himself, even to death upon the Cross, to save our souls? Would we not have reflected with indignation, upon the cause of all this grief, to so good, so great, so innocent a Person, even the sins of men? should we not have resolved for our own part, never to contribute to his pain Heb. 10 again, but to live in all Obedience, 29. Love, and Gratitude to God, and our Blessed Saviour to the end of our lives? should we not have made the most passionate professions of Fidelity and Constancy to him, that has thus re-

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deemed and purchased us by His blood? should we not have exercised acts of faith, affiance, trust and confidence in his Word and Promises, that if we fulfil our resolutions, and perform our duty as well as our weak and frail condition will allow, that then we shall be accepted of Him, received into his Favour, and made partakers of the great and precious promises of His Gospel? and when you have considered all these things, and understand them competently well, and have prayed to God to enlighten your mind, and purge your soul from all corrupt affections, from every evil habit that is contrary to his Holy nature, to his most pure and righteous Law; that you may serve and worship him, with some degrees of knowledge, and with a sincere and perfect heart, then you may assure your self, that you are worthy to receive, that your Devotion will be accepted, and your Offering rewarded, that you shall have Grace and assistance from above, to grow better and better, till
you

you come to be perfect in Christ Jesus. The sum of all is this, the Minister, by the command, and in the name of God, exhibits and offers the blessings of the Gospel to the Communicants, and they by receiving the outward signs thereof, profess themselves the Disciples of our Lord, that they believe his Doctrine, trust in his Mediation, hope in his Promises, and are resolved to live according to his Laws. He then who is sincere in these his professions and resolutions receives worthily ; and he who presents himself in such a solemn manner at the Holy Sacrament, making, and being understood to make profession of his Christian Faith, and a solemn dedication of himself to the obedience thereof for ever, when, at the same time, he neither understands it, regards it, or designs to practise it, is an Hypocrite, a Prophaner, a Blasphemer of God, and therefore *eats and drinks* ^{1 Cor.} *damnation to himself* ; incurs the high displeasure of God, and may therefore expect that the Judgments of

God should follow him. For *for this cause many are sick and weak among you, and many are fallen asleep*, as *S. Paul* interprets the damnation spoken of before, v. 30.

Par. Sir, I thank you with all mine heart, and if I be not too tedious to you, give me leave to ask you one question more before I go.

Min. Pray ask me what you will, for I assure you, I am mightily pleas'd to find you so inquisitive.

Par. What is the reason then, (since, as I understand by you, a disposition to every Christian Grace is requisite in a worthy Communicant) that the Rubrick, and all Divines, insist in a particular manner upon Love and Charity, reconciling, and being reconciled to our enemies?

Min. It is well observed, they do so; yet not as exclusive of any other duties. But indeed there is all the reason in the world to remind our Communicants, in a more particular manner, of the duties of Love, and universal Charity.

First,

First, Because the Religion of our Blessed Saviour, which we here so solemnly profess, is founded in Love and Mercy ; in the most perfect and ineffable goodness, which moved Almighty God, by the mediation of our Blessed Saviour, to offer easie terms of Pardon, Peace, assistance, and eternal Life, to all that should embrace them. For *He loved us when we were yet his enemies, and sent his only begotten son into the world, that whosoever would but believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* And therefore malice, hatred, envy, and evil will, are dispositions, radically contrary to Christianity, such as render us utterly unfit to have any thing to do with the solemn rites of this Religion.

Moreover secondly, The Religion it self, that Christian Law, which we here profess to embrace, and resolve to practise, is a *Law of Love.* Universal Charity is the principle and life of our Religion, which influences the whole, and mingles it

self with every part thereof, insomuch
 that it is distinguished, and describ'd
 by this single Grace of Love. For
 om. 13. 9. *love is the fulfilling of the law*, saith
 Gal. 5. 14. *S. Paul*: And Hereby, sayes *S. John*,
 Matt. 22, 37. speaking of Love, *we know that we are*
 Joh. 3. 23. *of the truth, and shall assure our hearts*
before him. And this is his command-
ment, that we believe on the name of his
Son Jesus Christ, and love one another
as he gave us Commandment. So that
 all our professions of Faith and Obe-
 dience at the Holy Table, are a pro-
 phanation of the name of God, and
 wholly ineffectual to us, so long as
 the temper of our minds, and the dis-
 positions of our Souls are contrary to
 the Religion we profess. For unless
 Cor. 13. *Christ be in us*, says *S. Paul*, that is,
 the Spirit of Christ, the Goodness,
 Love, Meekness, Compassion, Pati-
 ence, Forbearance, Condescension of
 Him and his Religion, *We are reprobates*.
 Malice indeed, is an indication
 of a Diabolick Nature, of a mind
 thoroughly vicious and degenerate. It
 is a temper wholly inconsistent with

a true principle of Christianity. *For in this the children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil, whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.* 1 Joh. 3. 10.

Again, There is a particular fitness and congruity in forgiving injuries, and reconciling enemies to the tenor and intention of the Holy Sacrament. God is there exhibited as willing to be reconciled to repenting sinners: He there renews, and revives his Covenant of Grace, and Mercy to us: Does not reason then, that is to say, the Law of our Nature, and the eternal immutable Law of reasonable Beings, require of us, that we in our capacity should do the same? How can we expect that from another, which, in the change of circumstances, we are not willing to do?

Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy brother, Matt. 7. 12.
and

and then come and offer thy gift. Which words, though they are spoken, by our Saviour, with immediate respect to the Peace-Offerings for the Atonement of sins; yet the reason holds in all our addresses to God for pardon, and has been generally applied by Divines, to the Holy Sacrament. Here, in especial manner, we pray for, and expect his Mercy. But is it reasonable to hope for such a favour at the hands of God, unless we are willing to give satisfaction, to our power, for the injuries we have done to others, and are ready to forgive offences against our selves? Our very nature will rebuke such a vain presumption. And our Saviour has expressly taught us, in the Parable of the Lord and his steward, that a readiness to forgive our enemies, is indispensably necessary in order to the pardon of our own miscarriages: The Lord forgave his steward a vast debt, but he forgetting the goodness of his Lord to him, sues and seizes his debtors, and fellow servants, for trivial sums.

Where

Wherefore his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise, says our Saviour, shall my heavenly father do to you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. Nay, he has taught us to acknowledge the reasonableness of it, in our daily prayer, *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.* Matt. 18. ult. Matt. 6.

He then that comes to the Holy Communion with evil will or malice in his heart, must needs be out of countenance, as a man that wants the wedding Garment. But he whose soul is free from that unchristian vice, he who is an enemy to none, but delights in the happiness of all, and is ready to assist whom he may; he who loves his Neighbour as himself, may approach with an humble confidence: such a suitable temper will give him courage, rational expectation, and a modest assurance that his address will be accepted, and his sins forgiven. Matt. 22. 11.

Finally,

4. Finally, and above all, the particular necessity of universal Charity at the Holy Sacrament is grounded chiefly upon that passage of *S. Paul* (*1 Cor. 10. 16, 17.*) *The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ? for we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.*

In the 16th Verse you see the Apostle affirms, that the faithful in the Holy Sacrament communicate together, of the body and blood of Christ? *The bread which we break is it not the Communion of the body of Christ?* and from thence, in the following words, he infers the most perfect Love and Unity amongst themselves, *v. 17. For we being many are (i.e. we ought to be) one bread and one body, why? because we all partake of that one bread, (or loaf) which words of the Apostle may be understood in a double sense, according to the several significations and constructions of the Holy Sacrament.* First,

First, as this Supper of our Lord is the Christian Passover, and bears an Analogy to the *Jewish* feast upon the Sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, which they ate together, after the Priest had presented and offered it up to God. And to this the Sacrament succeeds, and is understood as a perpetual feast upon the Sacrifice of our Blessed Saviour *whose body was offered once for all*: which body and blood we eat in the sign and figure to the end of the world, by his own Command. *Christ our Passover* (says the same Apostle) *is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast*, 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8.

The first interpretation of the 16th. ver.

Heb. 10. 10.

Now thus to eat and drink together at the Table, and upon the Sacrifice of our Lord, engages us to one another in the strictest ties of Love and Charity, as children of the same Father, redeemed by the same Lord, co-heirs of the same inheritance, fed at the same Table, and nourished by the same Loaf, which by common acceptation, and fair construction, is both a Token, a Profession, and a solemn

The first interpretation of the 17th. ver.

Solemn League of Love and Friendship.

The second
interpretation of the
16. v.

Again, according to the second Notion of the Holy Sacrament, as it is an inward and spiritual grace, a Seal of the New Testament, a confirmation of all the blessings of the Gospel to every individual Person that accepts the terms, and will fulfil the Counterpart, the sense of the 16th. Verse is this, *viz.* that all who perform the Conditions required of them, shall as surely enjoy the benefits of our Saviour's death, as they partake of the visible signs thereof, as they eat the Bread, and drink the Wine, by which it is *shewed forth and represented.* *The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ?* that is, of the benefits of both. Now this consent to the Conditions of the Gospel, this entering into Covenant with God, this sincere and chearful dedication of our selves to the Government of our
blessed

blessed Saviour, which render the Elements the Body and Blood of *Christ*, to the receiver is expressed in Scripture by all such Metaphors, as denote the most intire and perfect union, which can be possibly conceived between us, as that between the Husband and the Wife, the Vine and the Branches, the Shepherd and the Flock, the Head and Members, the Soul and Body; which Unity is not natural and personal, that were Blasphemy to imagine, but Intellectual and Moral: one Vital Principle moves them, one spirit acts and inhabits in them both: our Saviour and his true Disciples have the same opinions of what is good and evil, the same affections to every thing that is good, the same will to proceed and act according to the most perfect reason. *If Christ be in you*, (says St. Paul) *the body is dead*. Now the manner of His being in us, is explained in the former Verse, by His temper, spirit, and disposition. *For if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*; as in another

Eph. 5. 13.
 Jo. 15. 1.
 Jo. 10.
 1 Cor. 12.
 27.

Rom. 8.
 10.

V. 9.

ther place it is explained by his *Mind*,
That the same Mind may be in us, which
 Phil. 2. 5. *was in him:* And again, *That He may*
 Eph. 3. 17. *dwell in our hearts by Faith.*

*The second
 interpreta-
 tion of the
 17. v.*

Now from this spiritual Union be-
 twixt our Saviour, and those who
 worthily receive the Sacrament, that
 is, who have resigned themselves to
 the obedience of the Gospel, the A-
 postle infers the most intire and per-
 fect unity of the whole body of faith-
 ful Christians amongst themselves.
 Ye are, says he, united to Christ, by
 eating His Body, and drinking His
 Blood, He becomes a principle of
 new life to every one that receives
 the Sacrament as he ought to do.
 Now, says he, the union is the very
 same, and upon the same account, be-
 tween the faithful amongst them-
 selves. For, carrying on the Meta-
 phor, *We being many are one body, and*
 V. 17. *one bread, because we are all partakers*
of that one bread.

We all receive nourishment from
 the same root, and are therefore vi-
 tally united to one another ; *We are*
 all

all made to drink, (speaking of the Cup in the holy Sacrament) into one spirit. All which, laying aside the Allegory, is thus to be understood, that forasmuch as all sincere and faithful Christians have entred themselves into the same Society, undertaken the same institution and rule of life, consent and agree in the same mind, affections, desires, and conversation, therefore they are morally united to one another, as well as to our blessed Saviour. For our Saviour is not divided, He is one and the same in his Nature, his Life, his Gospel, his Laws, and Promises; so that if innumerable individuals devote themselves to the belief of his Propositions, to the love and obedience of his instructions, if they resign themselves, their wills and affections to his Command, whereby they become in a Moral sense united to him; these of necessity, by the same Moral unity, are joyned and knit amongst themselves. One common soul and spirit acts and influences them all, they

Jo. 17. 21

D have

have parted from their own private will and conduct, and resolved themselves into the guidance of another, whose Law is immoveably perfect, and the same to every particular person. There must be therefore an Universal, and intire consent in their opinions, desires, and course of life, as being derived from one and the same unalterable Law. *They grow up into him in all things,* says St. Paul, *which is the head even Christ.* And thus the unity of all sincere and faithful Christians with *Christ*, and with one another, may be easily understood of all: and yet it is as real, as strict, and proper as the Metaphor, in the Text before us, by which it is express: namely, the unity of innumerable Particles of Flower (by the balm or leaven which pervades and binds them all) in one Lump or Loaf. *For we being many are one body, and one bread, for we are all partakers of that one bread.*

The Conclusion then is this, that if all the faithful Christians upon earth,

earth, are as the several parts of the same loaf, if they are members one of another, if they receive their vital influence from the same root, if they are moved and acted by the same principle, then we ought, that is, we must, we can do no other than love one another intirely : no love like that which sympathy and consent of will creates : or to speak more properly, love is not the creature of sympathy and consent, but sympathy and consent of Will, are Love ; they are the thing it self, they cannot be distinguished. And therefore without Charity, without intire and perfect Love amongst our selves, we cannot be united to Christ, we cannot have eaten his Body or drunk his Blood. The Elements will be no more, to such as these, nay less, than common bread and wine. We cannot be the members of the mystical body of Christ, so long as we are separated from one another by the least degree of malice and evil will, *for no man ever hated his own flesh. He then that loves not, knows* 1 Cor. 13. 20. 1 Joh. 4. 8.

not God, (has no true principle of Religion) *for God is love.*

Upon all these accounts it is, that the Holy Sacrament has been always esteemed *a token of Unity, a bond of Charity, and a symbol of peace and concord.*

And hence it was, that in former times the Communicants brought their Offerings to the Minister, Fruits of the earth, or any Viands for entertainment, which, when the Sacrament was ended, were eaten as a common feast, by all degrees and ranks promiscuously, without respect to place or quality. And this was the *feast of Charity*, mentioned by *S. Jude v. 12.* and was concluded with a kiss, in token of entire and perfect friendship.

2 Pet. 1. 13.

But these pure and innocent Ceremonies being soon abused, were afterwards disused: Nevertheless we have something like them still continued in our Church, namely, in the Collection that is ordinarily made for the poor; and, after the Communion,

munion, in eating and drinking what remains of the Consecrated Elements in the Church, without distinction of persons, but, as the custom is, the meanest persons are invited to be the chief partakers of it. Rubr.

Par. Sir, I hope I understand you, and I am heartily glad that I did not receive before I was instructed ; and I find upon the matter, that it requires both time and retirement to prepare our selves as we ought to do, and the first time more especially ; but I will endeavour, by God's assistance, to follow your directions.

Min. You have made a very good inference from our whole discourse ; the reason of the action, and the solemnity of this most sacred Ordinance, the several parts of our Religion which it has respect to, require a very strict examination of our Knowledge, Repentance, Affections, purposes and desires, that so our apprehensions of the thing, and the intention of our mind, may bear a proportion to the outward action, to the

design, the words, and the gestures of the service. Our devotion, as you have heard, is to be exercised upon every part of Christianity, our particular defects are here to be bewailed; the several graces of Faith, Hope, and Love, universal Love towards God and Man, are to be exerted in this solemnity: and therefore it is very necessary to withdraw our selves from the world, and retire into our selves, some time before we receive.

- I. That we may recollect the principles, and the duties, the blessings and the promises of our Religion; that we may examine the state of our Soul; what necessary Article of Faith we doubt of, or do not understand; what evil habit remains unmortified, or is most unwilling to be subdued; what is the *sin that so easily besets us*, that has the advantage of our natural complexion, violent inclination, or present profit: what methods we have taken, or may take for the future, to subdue it; what improvements we have made since we

we last received, and how we have kept our resolutions.

2. That we may sufficiently bewail our failings, and take pleasure and satisfaction in our proficiency.

3. That we may excite and stir up our devotions by proper Meditations. These are weighty matters, yet very necessary, and therefore require a previous consideration.

But to say how long, how many hours, or days, or weeks a man ought to spend in Meditation and Prayer, before he may presume to receive; or to what degree of Knowledge and Virtue he must attain, is both impossible, and unnecessary. Do you but remember that competent knowledge, and great integrity, with an hearty desire to grow in Grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is the true preparation of the Soul, and you shall be able, with Sobriety, to judge for your self. He that wants this, is not fit to receive; but he that is thus qualified, is a worthy Communicant, though

Matt. 12.
20.

his knowledge may not be so distinct and clear, or his virtues so shining and perfect, as some other Christians possibly may be. Has not God encouraged persons of weak Faith, and a frail virtue, provided it be true, to hope for his acceptance? For *he will*

Matt. 7.7.
5. 6.

not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, (says our Saviour) that is, he will support it and inflame it by the influences of his Grace; if we have but the first beginnings of Holiness, an hearty liking of it, and desire after it; he will nourish it, and bring it to perfection. *For to them*

that knock it shall be opened. They that ask shall have. They that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.

No man therefore that is inquisitive to know, and sincere in practice, has any reason to be discouraged. For the Grace and assistance which God has promised, he bestows, and infuses into the hearts of men, as by the immediate influences of his Spirit upon the Soul, so especially, through his Word and Sacraments. It is cer-
tain

tain we cannot be too well prepared, but we may be too scrupulous about the degrees of Knowledge and Virtue, which are the indispensable conditions of our acceptance. We may prevent our growth in Grace, by thinking our selves unfit to use the means thereof. An hearty desire of perfection, with such endeavours, Improvements, Devotions and preparations, as our capacity and opportunity will permit, intitle us to the use, and to the benefits of the Holy Sacraments. For how could they be said to be the *means* of Grace, if none but persons already vested with it *in great degrees*, were allowed to use them. So that the sincere, though imperfect Christian, at the present, has a particular propriety in the Holy Sacrament, because they are appointed of God, to be the means of obtaining that, which these especially want. *For I am not come, says our Sa-* Matt. 9.
viour, to call the righteous, but sinners 12, 13.
to repentance. And again, *The whole*
need not a Physician, but the sick. Not
that

that there are any so *righteous*, as not to need *Repentance*, or so *whole* as not to need a *Physician*; but the more confirmed and establisht Men are in a course of Obedience to God, the more they are under the power of Religion, and the longer they have so continued; These, comparatively speaking, have the less occasion to use the means.

I say not this to encourage carelessness, or indifference in the worship of God, in any. God knows the frailties of the best are so great, and so many, that there is little fear of diverting a good Man from the worship of God, because of the comfort and support he feels therein, and the great necessity in this state of uncertainty and war that he finds thereof: But since our Saviour allows it, I would, by His own similitudes, expel and dissipate all fatal scruples out of the minds of the sincere, though young Beginners in Religion.

Par. Sir, I thank you for your pains, and I hope they are not ill bestowed;
by

by the Grace of God you shall see the good effect thereof in a little time.

Min. Ay, that is the end of all. I pray God confirm your Resolutions, and be sure you let me see you as often as you can, that I may explain, or enlarge upon any Article of our Discourse, or refresh your Memory, as occasion may require.

THE END.

Proper Prayers, suited to the
foregoing Account of the
Holy Sacrament.

A Preparatory Prayer.

ROM. 11.
33.

1 PET. 1. 12.

O Almighty God! although *thy*
Councils are unsearchable, and
thy ways past finding out, tho' neither I
nor the Angels of thy presence shall ever
comprehend the mystery of Man's Re-
demption thro' Jesus Christ; yet it
is enough for me, that thus it is re-
vealed; and therefore I believe with
all mine heart, I adore the mystery,
and resolve my hope and trust into
the merits of the Cross. I will now
and ever implore thy Pardon, Grace,
and Assistance, for His sake alone,
whose Body was broken, and whose
Blood was shed for the Remission of
my sins, mine only Saviour and Re-
deemer. And O that I might meet
my Lord this day, in the appointed
Signs, and Sacrament of his Passion,
with

with an heart as stedfast in the Faith,
 as if I had seen his Miracles; as full
 of Love, as if I had been healed of
 my diseases by his Power; as full of
 Joy, as if Himself had said unto me,
Be of good cheer, thy sins are all forgiven; Matt. 9.2.
 as constant in my Resolutions against
 all Impiety and sin, as if I had seen
 my Lord in his Agony, and heard
 Him say, *My God, my God, why hast*
Thou forsaken me! Matt. 27.
 O Lord encourage 46.
 my sincere desires, and enable me to
 perform the intended duties, with
 these, and all such holy dispositions
 as Thou requirest of me; assist my
 weakness by thy power, support and
 strengthen all those Graces which
 Thou hast begun, and perfect them,
 at last, in habits of Obedience, Love,
 and Praise through Jesus Christ our
 Lord. *Amen.*

*A short Ejaculation upon the recei-
 ving of the Bread.*

O Lord, I am a sinful man, not wor-
 thy that thou shouldst come under my Matt. 8.2]
 roof.

roof. O cleanse my soul from all impurity and filth, make me fit to receive so glorious a guest, and then abide and dwell in me for ever, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A short Ejaculation upon receiving of the Cup.

Mar. 9.
24.

Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief; that the Bread which I eat, and the Wine which I drink, thus blessed and given by thy Command, may be indeed the Body and Blood of Christ to me, the Seal of my Pardon, and the earnest of Eternal life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer to be said immediately after you have received the Elements.

O Most merciful God and Father! How wonderful is Thy love to me a wretched sinner, that Thou now vouchsafest to receive me as a guest to thine own Table, and hast fed me
Joh. 6. 53. *With the Bread of Heaven!* That thou shouldst

shouldst make an offer of peace and reconciliation to me ! That Thou shouldst never be weary of shewing mercy ! That the blood of our Saviour should be salutary still, and exhibited for ever, to the relief of all that are willing to be healed ! *Lord, what is man that thou art so mindful of him, or the Son of man that Thou so regardest him !* O make me worthy of this inestimable blessing ; purifie my thoughts, rectifie my will, sanctifie mine affections, strengthen my resolutions, that I may go on *from one degree of grace unto another, till I come to be perfect in Christ Jesus* : that I may improve my Talent, and be the better sensible for every Sacrament I receive, till my Faith shall at last be perfected in Vision, and the Communion of thy Body and Blood, shall be finally resolved into the full enjoyment of thine Eternal Deity, O Blessed Jesus. *Amen.*

Psal. 8. 4.

Col. 1. 28.

Mat. 25.

23.

A Prayer

*A Prayer to be said in your Closet after
your return from the Holy Communion.*

PL. 7. 9.
Rev. 1. 23.
PL. 51. 6.

O Eternal God! *That searchest
the hearts, and triest the reins
of men! Thou that requirest truth in
the inner parts!* O purge my soul from
all Hypocrisie and guile, that I may
now, and always, serve thee with
that sincerity and purity as I ought
to do! O Lord, I hope my inward
self, my very soul and heart did in-
dite the Praises, Prayers, and Vows
of my Tongue this day before thee.

PL. 103. 14. *O thou that remembrest whereof we are
made, and considerest that we are but*

Heb 4. 15. *men!* O Thou our great High Priest,
*who art touched with the feeling of our
infirmities, accept of my good in-
tentions, and forgive the coldness of
my Devotions, and the remissness of
my mind, the wandring of my
thoughts, and the many imperfecti-
ons of this, and of all mine Holy
things! and, O Lord, I beseech thee
continue upon my soul that Holy*
dispo-

disposition, that Religious sense, which, by thy Grace, I have been affected with this day; that I may be united to thy self in the same affections and desires; *that my life may be hid with Christ in God, that when Christ who is our life shall appear, I may appear with him in Glory*; to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be ascribed all Honour, Praise, Might, Majesty, Dominion and Obedience, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

Col. 3. 3

General Prayers to be said at any time.

A Confession of Sins.

O Eternal God! *Thou art the Almighty Creator, and wise disposer of all things*; Thou hast been very gracious unto me from my youth up until now; Thou hast blessed me with every thing that is necessary for the instruction of my soul, and for the support and pleasure of my life. O

Heb. i. 3

E

what

what obligations hast thou laid upon me, by thy particular Grace and favour towards me, to serve thee all the days of my life with a perfect heart?

What then shall I say unto Thee, O Thou that art the Judge of men? How have I requited thee for all the benefits Thou hast done unto me? I blush and am ashamed to appear before thee; but I cannot *fly from thy presence; I will therefore acknowledge my transgressions, and mine iniquities I will not hide.* How have I employed my childhood and youth in trifles? How has my mind been filled and possess'd with vanity? How impatient, and yet how frivolous have I been in my desires, how foolish in all mine actions? How insensible of my duty to thy Sacred Majesty, how cold in my Devotions, how negligent of Instruction, how indifferent to sober Counsels? How have I preferred the profit, the pomp, and pleasures of the World, before my duty to God, my neighbour, and my self?

O Lord, I am very sensible, that my sins are more in number, than the hairs of my head, more in weight than I am able to bear. Mine only hope is in Thy mercy, mine only refuge are Thy Gracious Promises of pardon and favour to repenting sinners, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Pardon.

O Most Holy and Righteous God! I humbly prostrate my self before thy Glorious Majesty, to acknowledge and bewail my many and grievous sins, which I have committed against Thee: *I do not know how often I have offended.* The sense of my miscarriages is very sharp upon my spirit, and the apprehension of Thy just displeasure is very terrible. But *Thou hast invited all that travel, and are heavy laden, to come unto Thee, and hast promised to refresh them. Thou hast laid help upon one that is mighty to save,*

Jam. 5.

Matt. 11.
28.

Ps. 139.

h. 1.

ai. 53.

even the Lamb that was slain from the beginning of the World: He has born our griefs and carried our sorrows, and on Him is laid the iniquities of us all. Lord, of thine infinite mercies, wash away my sins in the blood of my dear Redeemer; nail them to his Cross, bury them in his Grave, that they may never rise in Judgment against me, to accuse and terrifie my Conscience here, or condemn me to everlasting punishment in the life to come, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Resolution.

O Eternal God! I acknowledge and adore Thy Goodness towards me, that Thou hast made me a reasonable Creature, that I am not driven by necessity, as other Beings are, but am created in the Image of God himself.

Gen. i. 26.

O how just and reasonable is it, that we should glorifie our bountiful Creator with all the faculties which He has given us? O God, I bewail mine

mine own defects of Duty towards Thee ; I have not improved mine opportunities of knowledge ; I have been contented to know but little, and have practised less ; my mind has been employed and satisfied in trifling objects, my will has followed after vanity, and God has not been in all my thoughts. Psal. 10.

But now, O Lord, I am very sensible of my folly, as well as of my sin, and I am resolved for the time to come, to run the way of Thy Commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge mine heart. Psal. 119. I do most sincerely and devoutly offer and present my self, my soul and body, a lively reasonable sacrifice unto Thee : I unfeignedly resolve that sin shall no more have dominion over me, I will not yield my members Rom. 12. instruments of unrighteousness to sin, Rom. 6.1 but I will yield my self to God. Psal. 96. I will endeavour to affect my mind with the beauty of holiness, till I Love by thine affections, chuse what Thou proposest, believe what Thou revealest, expect Thy promises, and intirely

E 3

resign

reſign my ſelf to the obedience of thy Law: Lord, of thy Goodneſs accept mine offering, have mercy and compaſſion upon me, pity mine infirmities, conſider my Contrition, accept my Repentance, encourage my ſincerity, and reſtore me to Thy Grace and favour, through Jeſus Chriſt my Lord and only Saviour. *Amen.*

An Act of Hope.

Almighty and moſt merciful Father! Thou art Infinite in all Perfections, the Author and Fountain of all the ſcattered excellencies in the World! as Thou art juſt to puniſh Wickedneſs, ſo *Thy Mercy is over all thy Works: Thou rememberſt that we are but men*; Thou conſiderſt the various temptations, to which we are expoſed, the weakneſs of our reaſon, the violence of our paſſions, *the treachery of our hearts*, the infirmities of our Bodies, and all the imperfections of our preſent ſtate. *Thou art not therefore extreme to mark what*

m. 1.16.

1. 145.9.

103.14.

17.9.

what we do amiss ; Thou art slow to anger, full of compassion, and abundant in goodness and truth ; Thou hast no pleasure in the death of him that dies, but, if at any time the wicked will turn away from his sins, and do that which is lawful and right, Thou hast promised that he shall surely live, he shall not die, that iniquity shall not be his ruine. Thou, O blessed Jesus, hast purchased pardon and redemption for us, at the price of Thy precious blood ; Thou art the propitiation for our sins, our Advocate and only Mediator, who art able to save to the utmost, all that come unto God by Thee, seeing Thou ever livest to make intercession for us. I know, O Lord, that never a word shall fail that Thou hast spoken, and therefore I will never add the sin of distrust to the number of mine offences ; but I will always worship before my God, with the most honourable thoughts, the most worthy apprehensions I can conceive or frame. Lord, make me truly penitent for what is past, perfect in the purposes of mine heart, sincere in the

Exo. 34. 6

Ezek. 18.
23.

Eph. 1. 10

Heb. 9. 12

2 Pet. 2. 1

1 Cor. 6.

20.

1 Joh. 1. 9

Heb. 7. 25

1 King.

56.

professions of my Tongue, and diligent to live thereafter for the time to come, and then I will humbly hope in the promises of thy Gospel, and
 uk. 1. 74. *serve thee without fear, O blessed God, by the assistance of thy most holy and eternal Spirit. Amen.*

*A Prayer for Divine Assistance and
 increase of Grace.*

MOST Glorious and Blessed God! Thou art Infinite in all perfections, thy Will is pure, and all thine Excellencies are unchangeable. But though thou hast been pleased to derive upon us some small degrees of thy glorious Nature, though we act for the sake of such ends as we our selves propose and chuse; yet our faculties are weak, our sensitive appetites impose upon our reason, *The*
 om 7. 15. *law of our members prevails upon the*
 16. &c. *law of our mind, that we cannot do the thing that we would. O work in me, O Lord, what thou wouldst have*
 hil. 2. 13. *me both to will and do: assist me by thy*

thy Grace, that the power of evil habits may decay and dye in me, that the life of God and all the Graces of the Holy Spirit, may grow more vigorous and strong ! *Break not, O Lord,* Matt. 12. 20.
the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; but assist my weakness, strengthen my faint desires, encourage my sincerity, confirm my Faith, inflame my Love, cherish mine Hope, and enlarge my Charity : support me under all my conflicts, and carry me through all temptations, that I may chearfully do and suffer whatsoever pleases thee. O how *I hunger* Matt. 5. 6.
and thirst after righteousness ! how my Psal. 63. 1.
soul longeth after God ! how chearfully 84. 2.
could I leave all things that hinder me 42. 1.
behind, and press forwards for the prize Phil. 3. 14.
of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ, if by any means I may attain the resurrection of the dead. O perfect what thou hast begun, dwell in mine Eph. 3. 47.
heart by faith, and form thy self in me. Gal. 4. 19.
Guide me by thy counsels here, and receive me at last into thine everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Pf. 73. 24.
Amen. A

*A Prayer for a due intention of Mind,
in the Celebration of Religious Duties.*

1 Pet 3. 12.

O Father of Mercies, and God of all our Consolations ! It was Thine own essential Goodness that first inclined thee to create us, that thou mightest communicate thy self unto us, and exercise thy Grace and Bounty upon us. Thou hast given us all the assurances that our hearts can wish, *That thou delightest to do us good,* and that *thine ears are open to our prayers.* How justly then art thou the *desire* and the *Worship* of all nations ? O that I could praise thee with understanding, and recount thine Excellencies with that Sense and Adoration as I ought ! O that I could make my Prayers unto thee with a perfect Heart, with true desire and sutable endeavour ! that in all the Solemnities of Religion, I could approach thy presence with such an holy frame, with such a temper and affection of mind as the duty

duty may require ! But, O Lord, I
 cannot enough bewail mine own
 formality and deadness in things Di-
 vine and Spiritual. How difficult do
 I find it, to raise in my mind a lively
 sense of God, even in the most so-
 lemn duties ? How hard it is to bring
 my Soul to such a perfect Unity, to
 such an intire concurrence as it ought
 to have with the outward celebrati-
 ons of Religion ? But, O blessed
 Jesus, who once didst pity and for-
 give the infirmities of thine own dis-
 ciples, *who could not watch with thee* Mat. 26.
in hour, have mercy upon me ! Warm 45.
 mine Affections by the irradiations
 of thy Love, refine my Nature, and
 raise me above the body. Enlighten
 my Mind that I may know Thee ;
 correct the perverseness of my Will,
 that I may chearfully obey Thee ;
 mortifie all mine inordinate desires,
 that I may prefer and chuse Thee ;
 heal all my bodily distempers, ease
 my worldly cares, subdue mine un-
 ruly passions, and preserve me from
 too strong temptations, that my
 Mind

Mind may be always steddy and composed, always fit to serve Thee here, that I may sing an eternal Hallelujah to thy Praise hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be said, by well meaning persons, under any dejection or despondencies of Mind.

O Most Merciful God and Father!
 Jer. 10. 24. *Thou correctest, but it is with judgment not thine anger, that thou*
 Heb. 12. 6. *shouldst bring us to nothing; thou chastenest every son whom thou dost receive:*
 Heb. 12. 10. *All the evils that we suffer in the world, are the directions of thy Wisdom for our Good. I therefore*
 bless thy Holy Name for all thy Fatherly corrections, wherewith in Mercy thou hast ever visited me. And I humbly implore thy Divine Assistance, that I may now behave myself with the most intire and perfect resignation to thy Will, under that confusion, fear, and terror of mind, which thou art pleased to lay upon

upon me. I rejoyce in the midst of
 this sore affliction, (as it is a token
 of thy care and Love) how severely
 soever it may affect me. Lord, bring
 me nearer to thy self, and preserve
 me stedfast in my duty to the end,
 how sharp soever the means may be.
 But, O most gracious Father ! if the
 hiding of thy Countenance from me
 for a time, has wrought those happy
 effects upon me, for which thy Wis-
 dom and Goodness did design it ; Re-
 store me, O restore me, for Jesus
 Christ his sake, to a sense of thy
 Love, to peace in my Mind again. *I* Ps 6. 6.
am weary of my groaning, all the night
long do I water my couch with my tears,
 my Soul is disquieted within me, sunk
 down into the dust of death, even in-
 to the pit of hell. *Visit me, O God, with* Ps 106. 4.
thy salvation, cause thine Holy Spi-
 rit to descend into mine heart, that
 he may defend and guard me in all
 my tryals, support and quiet my de-
 jected Mind : *Thy hand is not shortned* Is. 50. 2.
that it cannot save ; say but the word, 59. 1.
O Lord, and thy servant shall be healed. Matt. 8. 8.

O how would I magnifie thy Glory, imitate thy Life, and obey thy Will, if Thou shouldst be pleased to trust me with Health and Peace again.

Lord, pardon, and hear the importunity of thy servant; my heart is full, *my soul also is sore troubled. Lord, how long wilt thou punish me? O turn Thee again, and have mercy upon me; consider my complaint, and let my crying come unto Thee!* O how cheerfully would I do or suffer any thing, whereby I might testifie the sincerity of mine Adoration, Love, and Duty to Thy Sacred Majesty! *I have none in Heaven but God, and there is none upon Earth that I desire in comparison of Thee!* O when shall I feel that joy and peace in my mind, which Thou hast promised to *those that Love Thy Law?* O when wilt thou dispel those clouds of diffidence and fear, which depress and trouble me, even now, that I find in my self the most sincere desires to do my duty in the World! *Yet not my will, O Lord, but Thine be done; here I am, do with me whatsoever pleases*

Psal. 6. 4.

55. 5.

142. 1.

Psal. 60. 1.

Lam. 5.

20, 21.

Pl. 73. 25.

Pl. 119. 165.

Matt. 26.

42.

pleases Thee; Though Thou shouldst slay me, yet will I trust in Thee. I throw my self into the Arms of Thy mercy, beseeching Thee to lay no more upon me, than Thou shalt enable me to bear; and all I beg upon the alone Account of the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, my Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

1 Cor. 10.
13.

A Prayer for Protection, with Thanksgiving.

O Eternal God! Thou art the Almighty Father of the world; I was created by thy Power, and am preserved by thy Wisdom and Goodness: I am truly sensible of Thy particular Grace and favour towards me, in all the periods and states of life, thro' which I have passed*. O blessed God, affect my mind as it ought to be, with a sense of thy bounty and beneficence, that I may rely upon Thy Providence for the time to come; that I may be wholly re-

* Mention here the particular blessings of your condition, whether in pious Parents, or in hopeful Children, prosperous estate, faithful friends, bountiful benefactors, good husband, discreet or virtuous wife, &c.

sign'd

sign'd to Thy most blessed Will, and fully satisfied under all Thy dispensations towards me. Endue me, O Lord, with all those gifts and graces, that may enable me to acquit my self as I ought to do, in all the conditions of life, which thou shalt be pleased to call me to ; open mine understanding, rectifie mine errors, quicken my diligence, strengthen my faith, and with my capacities enlarge my Charity, that Thou mayst still continue to be gracious to me, to direct my Counsel, to preserve my health, to guide my hand, and to bless me in all my ways and works, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose most holy name and words, I conclude mine imperfect prayers, saying,

Our Father, &c.

THE END.

Matth. xxii. 37, 38, 39.

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great Commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

THE Immortality of the Soul, and a future state of Bliss or Misery, according as our actions in the flesh have been good or evil; are the common Notions, the indeleble Opinions, the universal expectation of Mankind. And therefore a distinct and perfect knowledge of Religion, or of such an Institution of Faith and Manners, as will certainly be accepted of God, procure his favour here, and everlasting blessedness in the Life to come, is a matter of the highest concernment to us.

No reasonable Man, that believes a future Judgment, with the consequent Rewards and Punishments, can find any peace or contentment in his Mind, till by a clear understanding of his duty, and a firm resolution to fulfil it, he has founded to himself, a rational hope of a happy life in the other World.

But though the thing it self has been always steddily believed, yet a consistent regular account of this future Life was never stated; nor the methods by which it might certainly be obtained, which so much concerns us, discovered to the World: till the light of the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel appeared, to give us the knowledge of Salvation.

Even the Jews had no distinct and clear conception of the Life to come. The opinions of the Pharisees themselves concerning it, (who were the most zealous assertors of it) were very absurd and sensual; insomuch that Josephus compares the heaven of the Pharisees to that of the Greeks, who dream'd

dream'd of fortunate Islands, replenish'd with all imaginable delights of the Body, quick and more curious appetites, and more perfect objects of satisfaction.

But by the Ministry of our Blessed Saviour, *Life and Immortality* are brought to light, propos'd intelligibly, and asserted with Divine Authority. Hence the Pharisees having heard of the Wisdom of our Saviour, that he had put the Sadducees to silence, cleared the Doctrine of the Resurrection, and was able to answer all the doubts and questions concerning the life to come, sent a Lawyer, from amongst themselves, to make an experiment of his Judgment, who enquires of our Saviour, under the style of Master; *Which is the great Commandment?* Jesus said unto him, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thy self.*

V. 35.

The Text is a general Account of the way and method, whereby we may attain everlasting life; of such

a conversation and course of action here, as will procure to us everlasting blessedness in the world to come.

And all the Duties, Qualities, and Habits, which are required of us, as conditions of Eternal life, are comprehended by our Saviour under these Two Heads.

I. The first respects our duty towards God: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, &c.*

II. The second respects our duty towards our Neighbour: *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.*

I. I begin with the first of these, which respects our Duty towards God. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind: This is the first and great Commandment.* And in the handling of this copious Argument, I shall confine my thoughts to this following Method.

I. First, I shall explain the terms, and give you a more general account of the nature of the duty; and the Principles into which it is resolved.

Secondly,

Secondly, I shall consider the particular parts, the necessary acts and exercises of *Love to God*. First, *With all the Heart, and with all the Soul*: And Secondly, *With all the Mind*. 2.

Thirdly, I shall consider upon what Accounts, the *Love of God with all the Heart, and with all the Soul, and with all the Mind*, may be said to be the *First and Great Commandment*. 3.

Fourthly, I shall perswade, and encourage you to the practice of this duty, and the pursuit of this habit of *Love to God*, by several motives, couched and implied in this one word, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*. 4.

Fifthly and Lastly, I shall make Application of the whole. 5.

I begin with the first of these, the Explication of the terms, and the consideration of the nature of the duty in the general, and the Principles into which it is resolved: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*. To *Love*, is to take delight and pleasure in the Object, with a desire of such an enjoyment of it, as the nature of the thing will 1.

bear, and Reason will permit ; and the causes, or reasons of such Delight and Desire, are only two, (however various the objects, about which they are exercised, may be) namely, an opinion of personal excellency in the object it self, or a sense of kindness, or benefits received from it. These are the onely Principles of Love ; these are the onely causes of all the delight and desire in the world, that is voluntary and chosen. Persons, 'tis true, may be, and very frequently are mistaken, in their apprehensions of beauty and goodness, whereby this best, and most agreeable passion of love, is too often exercised upon unworthy objects, pursued and enjoyed after an unreasonable manner. But notwithstanding that, whether the object be wisely chosen or foolishly, whether the beauty apprehended, be real, or imaginary, wheresoever delight and desire are, there beauty, or goodness in the object, is, however, apprehended and supposed.

And from this general account of
the

the nature and Principles of Love, we may most firmly establish the notion of Love to God. Wherefore then *to Love the Lord our God*, is so to apprehend the excellencies of the Divine nature, his absolute perfections in themselves, and his infinite grace, and goodness towards us, as that we most sincerely and heartily admire and adore his Majesty, and earnestly desire the most intimate enjoyment of Him, and the most perfect union with Him, that we are capable of. This is the nature of the Duty in the general.

And the Qualifications with which it ought to be exercised, are three, *with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind.*

The Text is taken out of *Deut. 6. 5.* *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might.* St. Mark, and St. Luke express it, *with all thy Strength.* Luke 10. 37. And because of this indifferent variation of the phrase, and because the same thing is sometimes expressed by

one of these phrases only, - as *with all thy Heart*, 1 Sam. 7. 3. Sometimes the *Heart* and *Soul* without the *Mind* or *Strength*, as in the 2 *Kings* 23. 3. Therefore some Expositors consider the *Heart*, the *Soul*, and *Mind*, as words of the same, or of equal signification, accumulated only to press, and inculcate the duty more effectually upon us, but not as a Climax of perfection in the practice of it.

But because we may observe a real and material difference, in the common use and acceptation of the words, expressing the degrees of Intention, and desire, in the acts and operations of the *Soul*; and because it will very much administer to the just explication of the duty, therefore I shall presume, and with good authority, to consider the *Heart*, the *Soul* and *Mind*, as qualifications of gradual Excellency, as a Scale of Perfection, in the practice and exercise of Love to God.

I. And first, *With all thy Heart*: By the *Heart*, according to the usual signification

nification of that Metaphor, we understand *Integrity, Sincerity* of affection; *Te have obeyed from the heart*, Rom. 6. 17. *the form of doctrine that was delivered you*, that is, *sincerely*, and without *hypocrisie*. And innumerable other places.

Secondly, *with all thy Soul*, that is, with Understanding and Knowledge; that our Love of God be not only *Sincere*, but grounded well, proceeding from Causes proper and considered; not with Passion only, but with Judgment. The Soul here may be understood of Reason and Discretion, whereby we distinguish of Good and Evil, base and worthy, and to whose determinations the Will, Desires, and instruments of Action are obedient.

Thirdly, *with all thy Mind*. By the *Mind*, may be understood the more Spiritual Principle in Man, whereby he feels, and enjoys the truth of such Propositions, as Reason, by comparing one thing with another, shall discover. Reason is, as it were, an Artificial, Mechanical deduction of

Con-

Conclusions from Premises, but the Mind enjoys them *really*, by an intire agreement with the Proposition. And upon this account the wicked, in Scripture, are said to be *ψυχικοί*, such as are able to collect the truths of Religion, or any other Propositions, by Scholastick inference; but the Pious and Regenerate have an inward sensation of things Intellectual and Divine, and are therefore called *πνευματικοί*, to whose Body and Soul, is added *Mind or Spirit*.

Wherefore then, to *Love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind*, is sincerely to Adore and Delight in God, from a *distinct perception*, from an *inward sensation* as well of his absolute Perfections in themselves, as of His infinite Bounty and Goodness towards us. And thus I have explained the Terms, and stated the Nature of the duty in general.

2. I proceed, as I proposed, in the second place, to consider the particular parts, the necessary acts and exercises of

of Love to God, First, *with all our Heart, and with all our Soul*; Secondly, *with all our Mind*.

And First, the particular acts, implied in the *Love of God with all the Heart, and with all the Soul*, are chiefly these,

First, the Preference of God to all other objects whatsoever. He that loves with Judgment, esteems and values according to *weight and measure*, according to the degrees of beauty, and excellence in the object. As he readily acknowledges whatsoever worth or goodness be any where discerns, so he suffers not his Passion and desire to go before his understanding.

But God is a Being that exists of himself, in whom is implied whatsoever can be supposed to be, and in whom all being is resolved, as into its proper and most perfect cause. Defect supposes impotence and controul; but Omnipotence implies the most absolute perfection. Desire of Good when known is *necessary*. But can any

any instance of goodness or perfection be hid from his knowledge, or kept from his possession, who is the cause of all things?

Wherefore then, since all perfections are essential to this first and Original Good; one of the necessary acts of Love to such a being is the preference of him to all other Beings whatsoever. If our Love of God be with all the Soul, with judgment and understanding, then we know that *there is none in heaven but God, and none upon earth to be desired in comparison of Him*; That he is the fountain of all the imperfect excellencies of all created Beings; that he is the most constant, and the most potent friend and benefactor; who made us by his Power, and sustains us by his Providence, guides us by his Council, assists us by his Spirit; pities our Weakness, pardons our Sins, and is ready, at last, to receive us into Glory. Wherefore therefore, He is understood, all other objects, habits, and desires, will necessarily fall before

before him. For whatsoever beauty or goodness may be found in any other object, they are all derived from God, *in whom all fullness dwells*. That is the first.

The Second particular implied in the Love of God, *with all the Heart*, and *with all the Soul*; is a stedfast Faith in whatsoever he reveals. A sincere affection is apt, in its nature, to beget an unreasonable credulity. It is very difficult to perswade our selves that our friend, whose happiness we know is our greatest pleasure, should abuse our Passion by deceit and guile, to sport or private ends: and therefore, notwithstanding all the infirmities of humane Nature, all the insincerities which may proceed from wicked dispositions, and violent temptations; yet Love creates an intire and perfect confidence in one another. How much more if our Love of God be with all our Heart and Soul, shall we believe his Word, and rely upon his Promises? because he is Truth it self, and cannot be deceived,

ceived: he is Wisdom it self, and cannot propose or promise at adventure; he is Power it self, and can bring into act whatsoever he decrees; He is Goodness it self, and neither can, nor will deceive us. If therefore our Love of God be sincere, and with understanding, the most intire and perfect confidence in his Word and Promises are necessary. We shall inquire into his Will, study his Laws, submit our apprehensions to his determinations, and steadfastly believe whatsoever he reveals. If there arise among you a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3. and giveth you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, go after other gods which thou hast not known, and serve them, thou shalt not hearken to that Prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord thy God proveth thee to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul. The adhering firmly to the Word of God, though a Wonder should

should be wrought in confirmation of a contrary doctrine, is made a test of our Love of God, by God himself. That is the Second.

The Third particular implied in the *Love of God, with all the heart, and with all the Soul*, is such an imitation of the Divine Perfections, as our present state, and capacity will permit.

Self-love, or a desire of being happy and perfect in the kind, is the necessary inclination, or the first principle of every being. And therefore whatsoever Good or excellence we clearly understand, as essential to, or perfective of our being, or conducive to the ease and convenience of our life, we cannot chuse but desire the possession of it. It is not so properly an act of reason, as an instinct of nature. But if we *love the Lord our God with all our Heart and Soul*, with sincerity and understanding, we shall discern the beauty, capacity, and perfection of our own nature, in the Qualities and the life of the first, and most perfect of rational Beings ;
and

and shall therefore necessarily desire to imitate those Divine vertues which we so adore and love. The abstracted essence of God is impossible to be comprehended by a finite understanding, but we judge of the Divinity, as of all things else, by effects and operations, by his works of Creation and Providence, by his Universal righteousness, wisdom, purity, and goodness, so visible in the government of the World. If we therefore apprehend and admire these glorious Attributes of God, we shall endeavour to transcribe his Copy, and model our Souls according to this Exemplar; because the resolution of the mind, that such a quality is worthy and excellent, includes desire and imitation: we shall endeavour to be *holy, as God is holy, in all our conversation, that as he is, so we may be in the World,* wise in the management of our ends, just in our dealings, merciful to the distressed, ready to forgive our enemies, in all things aspiring after the Divine perfections, and letting the
 Life

Life of God before us, as the Rule of our Conversation: That's the Third.

The fourth particular implied in the *Love of God with all the Heart, and with all the Soul*, is a constant uniform Obedience to his Will.

What a chearful flexibility, what a readiness to do any thing that may be grateful and pleasant to each other, may be observed in the love of equals? If therefore love has such a power, where the authority is precarious only, and by consent; how much more will the Love of God oblige us to the most diligent observance of *His* will; forasmuch as the love of our Superiors includes obedience in its nature. No man can intirely love a Prince, or a Father, that does not approve and obey his Precepts; and therefore St. John defines the Love of God by *keeping his Commandments*, 1 Joh. 5. 3. This is the *Love of God, that we keep his Commandments*. We cannot add to infinite perfection, we cannot oblige Him in any real services, who is already Lord of all; there re-

mains therefore no possible testimony of our Love to God, without the resignation of our opinions, desires, and actions to his will. This is all we have to offer: *If a man Love me, (says our Saviour) he will keep my words: (John 14. 23.) and, he that hath my Commandments and doth them, he it is that loves me.*

Would it not be the greatest selfishness in love, if our friend should prescribe us a method of happiness, promise his assistance, assure us of success, and we should receive it civilly, applaud his judgment, believe all he says, but never proceed to accomplish the methods he proposes? Hence those who live in disobedience to the Laws of God are said to *hate Him*: Exod. 20. 6.

Indeed, if we have any true conceptions of the Divine perfections, which love supposes, we know that God is infinite in wisdom to direct and guide us; infinite in goodness, and will suit his commands to our abilities; full of mercy and compassion,
and

and will pity our weakness, and pardon our failings.

If therefore love, wheresoever it is sincere, is apt to create an extravagant desire of pleasing the object, even with the utmost hazard, and sometimes by unlawful practices, by humouring vices, flattering deformities, serving the basest ends, any thing indeed that they think may gratifie the person. How much more will the love of God oblige us to the strictest care and observance of His will, because we know that His will is perfect; He can command us nothing, nor can he be pleased with any thing, that is not truly Good. He cannot be giddy and inconstant, froward and uncertain, humorisme and hard to be pleased, as imperfect objects are; but He will receive our addresses, and accept our services. He will enable us to obey him, and make the best construction of all our sincere endeavours, and at last compleat our love in the everlasting enjoyment of Himself. That's the 4th.

5. The last particular imply'd in the *Love of God with all the heart and with all the Soul*, is the most hearty sorrow whensoever we shall offend him, with an earnest desire to be reconciled.

Whosoever loves, will endeavour to recommend himself, by an obliging deportment, to the good opinion of the object; pursues a kind acceptance, waits a sutable return, and expects at length the enjoyment of his hopes. If therefore he has given any just occasion of Offence, by omitting what was necessary to be done, or by doing any thing that was contrary to his Pretensions, or inconsistent with his Love, it must needs affect him with indignation against himself, that he should bring his own sincerity into question, injure the person, whose happiness is his greatest Joy, retard his progress towards that end he chiefly aims at, and superinduce a Cloud upon that Sun, by whose influence he lives.

Thus also in respect of God, if we love him with Understanding, we cannot

cannot but pursue his favour, and most earnestly desire to be loved again; because we know that our Love of God, if it be sincere and pure, will be returned in the most ravishing delights: we know that his Love is Life; that it is not an empty Passion, but exerted in the most substantial effects, and happy instances. And therefore that we should have sinned against him, must needs be the most insupportable affliction; because in proportion to the nature of our offence, our chief design of obtaining his favour, and the sight of his countenance will be hindred; and all our work, of so great importance, may be to begin again. And as we shall be deeply sensible of our offence, so shall we also be very solicitous to be reconciled.

One of the most essential acts of Love, is a desire of the good opinion of the object; nor is any thing more directly contrary to that Passion, than stoutness and indifference. No man can sit down and be satisfied

under the displeasure of his friend, till he has acknowledged his offence, dimulced his anger by futable meditations, and all such other acts, as reason in his case, will suggest unto him.

Thus as our Love of God will make us very careful to obtain and preserve his favour, so shall we also be extremely solicitous, in case of offences, to be reconciled. If our love of God was ever real, it can never be withdrawn: when once we have understood, and have been warmed with the love of God, it is not possible, in the nature of the thing, that we should ever be reduced to indifference; for the glory of God is immutable, and his Beauty perfect, which where they are understood, will of necessity both attract, and continue Desire and Love, as being the only object that can fully delight and satisfy the faculty. Neither is this all, but we know moreover, that we cannot be happy without his Love: if He hide his face we are wretched and undone; that Impartial Justice towards offenders, is
as

as certain an Attribute of God, as Infinite Goodness. Nothing therefore can discourage us, we shall never give over our Confessions, and Tears, our Vows and Resolutions, and the tender of all such satisfactions as are possible for us to make, till we have reason to hope, that our sins are pardoned, and our persons are again received into his favour.

These are the essential parts, the necessary acts of Love to God, viz. That we prefer Him to all other objects whatsoever, believe his Word, and rely upon his Promises, imitate his Life, and obey his Laws, be deeply sorrowful whensoever we offend him, and earnestly endeavour to be reconciled. All these several expressions are of the essence of Love, and flow from the nature of the thing.

And so I proceed, as I proposed, in the second place to consider the more perfect exercises of Love to God, *with all thy Mind. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Mind,*

2.

In the explication of the Words, it has been already noted, that the *Love of God with all the soul*, is such an *adoration of God*, as proceeds from a sense of the Glories and excellencies of His Being, as they are apprehended by reason, and inferr'd from his Definition, Nature and Operations; But the *Love of God with all the mind*, is with a more quick, and sensible perception of the Divine perfections, with reason improved into a more lively apprehension of the object.

A young Philosopher shall acknowledge the benefits of *frugality*, suppose, or of any other Verrue, and shall be able himself to deduce the advantages of it, by the rules of Logic, and shall believe his deductions to be regular and true. But a man of Age and Experience, besides what reason suggests, from causes to effects, has a sense and feeling of the thing, he is affected with it; it has seized and taken possession of him, he is one with the Notion. Thus Reason infers the Perfections of God,
from

from necessary Principles, the Judgment is satisfied, and the Will performs such acts, as are suitable and consonant to such opinions and apprehensions of the Soul; But he whose knowledge has affected his mind, not only knows, believes, and acts accordingly; but he has also a more quick and sensible perception and enjoyment of the Divine Perfections, by an inexplicable agreement, harmony and delight; he is one with them, ravished and overcome of Desire and Love. And the particular acts implied in the Love of God with all the Mind are chiefly Three.

The first is frequent Meditation, and a due intention of the Mind, upon the beauty and excellencies of the object. This is both an act and a cause of the love of God with all the Mind. Where our affections are fixed, there all our faculties will be employed. Love therefore will provoke us to the meditation of God, and Meditation will improve our

Know-

I.

Knowledge and perfect our Love. For since it is impossible to discover a blemish in absolute perfection, the more we pry into Him, the more of necessity, we shall love him. Who-soever then is affected sensibly, and in his Mind, with the love of God, will separate considerable portions of his time, for the contemplation of the Divine Perfections; He will abstract his mind from sensible things, that it may be purer, and more free, more apt to apprehend, more easily impressed by objects Divine and Spiritual. Nothing hinders our clearer Knowledge, and more ardent love of God, but the prepossession of our affections, by the beauty and goodness of the World. These we converse with, these we admire and court; but as for the infinite perfections of God, we believe them, as the Doctrine of the Church, and hope to enjoy them through the merits of Christ, according to the Tradition of the Fathers. We resolve that God is in-

com-

comprehensible, as indeed He is: and therefore we never endeavour to find out so much of his beauty, as by a due disposition of Soul, without revelation or ecstasie, we might.

Whereas if our lives were more retired, castigate and sober, our spirits would be purer, our minds more quick and vigorous, objects Divine and Spiritual would be more agreeable, more easily felt, and enjoyed by us.

It were easie to consider particulars, and show how a due intention of mind upon the attributes of God, will more sensibly affect us. Do we adore Him for so much of his Infinite Goodness, as appears at the first view, in the general, or towards our selves? How much more should we be affected, if we look it round, and consider thoroughly this perfection of the will of God? That God who is Omnipotent, and under no controule, should be bounded in his Will, by the Laws of Goodness, Righteousness and

and Mercy. That He should vouchsafe to communicate his own likeness, and subject the whole Creation to the use and convenience of Man; that He should love us when we were his enemies, and restore our corrupted nature to its first integrity, by the passion of his only Son. That He should still follow us with kindness, wait to be gracious, not easily provoked, longer before He punishes. That his love to Man should be equal, and universal, but managed with the most perfect wisdom; diffused more warm, and lively where it is necessary; withdrawn and eclips'd, as the temper of the subject may require it: and all this, without any cause, or motive from without himself, but it is the pure effort, and energy of his own nature, no sudden passion to beget it, no slight, mistaken injury, no pride or envy to withdraw it, but goodness, sincere and pure, equal and impartial, exerted with the most perfect wisdom towards the whole Creation,

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on, from the beginning of the world, till time shall be no more. *O the depth of the riches both of the Wisdom and Goodness of God!* These depths, and these riches of his goodness, are not to be understood, but by a due intention of the mind. But whosoever thus exerts his Mind, his utmost self, in the contemplation of God, will love Him with his Mind too, because Desire and Love are always equal to our knowledge. That is the First.

The Second particular implied in *the Love of God with all our Mind*, is the Highest, and most extreme Delight, in such conversation with Him, and enjoyment of Him, as is suitable to our present state.

Desire of conversation with the object is a necessary act of Love. The nearer we approach it, the more we expect to be pleased; and when once we have attained to an intimate conversation, then all our previous passion and desire is perfected; We now enjoy the object in continual assurances

ees of mutual affection, we communicate our hopes and fears, our Joys and griefs, we consult, advise, and assist each other; and this indeed was the end at first proposed. Thus also in respect of God, wheresoever the Glories of his nature are apprehended, there the humble profession of our Love, the desire of his acceptance, the discovery of our needs, the opening of our hearts, the imploring his assistance, the expression of our passion in Hallelujahs, and Songs of Praise, will follow of necessity. Where these are wanting, there can be no opinion of the Goodness and Omniscience, of the Wisdom and Power of God.

But if our love of God be with all the Mind, with a more quick sensation of these perfections, acts of Religion will be our greatest pleasure, our most ravishing Delight: For by these we converse with that invisible Majesty, we adore, receive returns and pledges of his love, assurances of his favour, and encouragement

ment in our choice. That's the Second.

The last particular act implied in *the love of God with all the Mind*, is a fervent desire of perfect union with Him, and the Everlasting Fruition of Him.

Desire of the most intimate union, (according as the object is capable of being enjoyed) is a necessary part of love. And in respect of God, there is no one thing that the Scriptures do more plainly assert and inculcate, than the union of pious Men with God. Good men are said to be *joyned*, *καλλόμενοι*, *glued to the Lord*, and to be *one spirit*, to dwell in Christ, to put on Christ, to be as closely united as the Vine and branches, as husband and wife, as the foundation and the building, as the Soul and body. Finally, as God, and our blessed Saviour: for so our Saviour prays, *that those whom thou hast given me may be One, as thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.* Joh 17.21.

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May be one in us not essentially, or hypostatically, but in the consent of their will, in likeness of disposition, temper and design; as if they were acted by the same Principle; and in this, the proper unity of Souls consists. And thus our Saviour explains the Unity of Believers with himself, by *bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, John 15. 15.*

Indeed, the effects of this Union, the delights and pleasures which fill the minds of those who are thus united to God, are ineffable, and therefore, according to *S. Paul, Eph. 5. 32. it is a great mystery.*

Whosoever therefore loves the Lord his God with all his mind, with clearer knowledge, and more pure desire, will be impatient of a perfect Union, of the most full and satisfying fruition of God in Heaven. The more we know of God, the more our Souls will desire him, because he is absolutely perfect, and therefore we are sure to be for ever entertained with fresh discoveries of

of Beauty and Glory. Enjoyment will inflame our desire, till our Souls shall be wholly resolved into the object. O how despicable will all the World appear, even Life itself, in comparison of a more perfect participation of the Divine Nature! How earnestly shall we expect, till our Knowledge shall be improved into its utmost capacity, *that we may see him face to face!* How shall we long for such a compleat enjoyment as shall not be allayed by infirmities and sins, by temptations and despondencies, by natural corruptions and impure affections; but continue forever, vigorous and fruitful, constant and indissoluble!

And as these higher and more perfect degrees of Knowledge, and desire, ought to be pursued as a duty; so they are sometimes bestowed upon the diligent and sincere, as a reward. God is pleased to *manifest himself unto them, to raise their desires, and refresh them with returns of his*

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Love,

Love, and *cause them to drink of the rivers of His pleasure.*

But if we never attain to this more spiritual frame; if our minds, through worldly impediments shall never be improved into a distinct and clear perception of the Attributes of God: Yet if our love of God be with competent knowledge, and great sincerity, if it be fruitful in the necessary acts of Imitation, Faith, Obedience, and the rest, it will be rewarded, and made perfect hereafter, though it never arrive at the more perfect Knowledge and Desire of God here.

And thus I have considered the particular parts, the necessary acts and exercises of love to God: First, *with all thy Heart and with all thy Soul*, secondly, *with all thy Mind*.

3. And the duty so particularly stated and examined, we may easily discern the reason of that primacy, and pre-
cedency, which our Saviour ascribes to *this* above all the Commands of God, *This is the first and great Com-*
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mandment. And this was the Third head of discourse proposed.

It is first in the disposition of God himself. He begins his Institution of Laws with, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind.* Deut. 6. 5.

It is first in the order of Nature, it is the root, the principle, and reason of all other duties whatsoever.

It is first in respect of the Object, end, or final resolution of the Duty, being chiefly exercised upon the Majesty of God himself.

It is first in respect of Amplitude and Capacity, forasmuch as all the other duties of Religion have a necessary dependance upon it, and relation to it.

And the Duty being found so Honourable in its order, so pleasant and agreeable to the humane Nature in it self; my pains in proposing Motives, (which was the Fourth particular) are, I hope, prevented.

The distinct understanding of the Divine Perfections, requiring such intention and purity of Mind, such a concurrence of circumstances, as are competent to very few, therefore our Saviour urges the duty of *love to God* by an Argument that falls under Sense, and is easily understood of all, that is to say, our *Relation to God*, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.*

Though God is infinitely perfect, yet he vouchsafed to impart his likeness, and form a relation to himself, that he might exercise his Goodness upon us, and make us happy.

1. First, in our Creation, in the Dignity, Liberty, and Ingenuity of our Nature, acting as God *freely*, and for the sake of ends, understanding clearly, loving regularly, capable of Arts, Philosophy, Policy, and Religion; and are sure to live for ever.
2. Secondly, in our Redemption; when we so foolishly desire to be independent; and did, what lay in us, to cast off our Relation to God: then God, that knew our infirmities,
pitied

pitied our follies, and redeemed us, by the blood of his Son, from the captivity of sin, from our miserable servitude under the Tyranny of our selves, our irregular lusts and passions, and restored us to the rectitude of our Will, to the Love and Obedience of himself again.

Thirdly, in His particular Care and Providence; The Government of God is managed by infinite Wisdom. And though all his benefits are not bestowed upon every man, yet, if we rightly judge, we shall find, they are dispensed with an equal and impartial hand. If one has riches, another has health; if one has external honour, another has a good Reputation; if one has strength, another has wit: Every man for the most part, has some particular happiness in his own condition, sufficient to ballance his wants, *Thou shalt therefore love the Lord thy God.*

3.

What therefore now remains, but that we resolve to determine our

Use.

Affections, which are never idle, never indifferent, upon this most perfect Object; of whom our opinion shall never vary, our desire shall never cool, enjoyment never clog; where our reception shall be gracious, and our passion encouraged; whose kindness is immutable, and whose Love is Operative: It is Strength in Difficulties, in Hazards Wisdom, in Temptations Victory, in Distress a Refuge, in Fears a Support, in Death everlasting Life: to which of his Mercy may He bring us all, for Jesus Christ his sake the Righteous: To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Praise and Obedience, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

Matth. xxii. 39, 40.

And the Second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.

On these Two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

THE Pharisees envying the Fame of our Saviour's Wisdom, and fearing the success of his doctrine, and the revolt of the Jews, took counsel together how they might intangle him in his talk; and resolved upon a Question of State to be propos'd unto him; *Is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar or not?* To which they knew a direct and positive answer, would either betray him into the high displeasure of the King, or at least into the hatred of the Potent Faction of *Herodians*. But our Saviour, who knew their thoughts,

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v. 17.

- defeated their malice, by such a prudent and inoffensive answer, as neither Party could except against, *viz.* *Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesars, and unto God the things that are God's!* and when they heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way; and the same day the Sadducees came to him also, who indeed believe no future state at all, but they dissembled their opinion for the present, and pretended to consult our Saviour, as if they sincerely desired his Judgment, in a case concerning the Resurrection of the dead, but, in truth, with intent to expole the doctrine it self; Namely, *if a Woman have seven Husbands upon Earth, in the Resurrection whose of the seven shall she be?* In answer to which, our Saviour corrects their false and gross opinion of the future life, and shows them their ignorance of the state of the question they proposed; *For in the Resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage;* and thus with the same most perfect
- V. 12.
- V. 13.
- V. 18.
- V. 30.

perfect wisdom, he astonishes the multitude, and put the Sadducees to silence

V. 33.

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100. Last of all, a Lawyer having heard of the wisdom of our Saviour, that he had put the Sadducees to silence, and was able to answer all the doubts and Questions concerning the life to come, inquires of our Saviour, under the style of Master, Which is the great Commandment? Jesus saith unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

V. 36.

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This is the First and the Great Commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Which words are a general Account of the Way and Method, whereby we may attain everlasting life; of such a conversation and course of action here, as will procure to us everlasting blessedness in the World to come.

And all the duties, qualities, and habits, which are required of us, as condi-

conditions of Eternal life, are comprehended, by our Saviour, under these Two Heads:

I. The first respects our duty towards God; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, &c.*

II. The second respects our duty towards our Neighbour, in the words of my Text: *And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self. On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*

In the handling of this useful and necessary Argument, I shall confine my Discourse to this following Method:

I. First, I shall explain the nature of the duty, and consider what is understood by *loving our Neighbour as our selves.*

2. Secondly, I shall illustrate the beauty and necessity of universal love, and urge it upon your practice, by several Arguments, couch'd and implied in these words, *Thy Neighbor.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, I shall represent the likeness of this command to the former, that of love to God, in several Particulars; *and the second is like unto it.*

Fourthly, I shall consider upon what Accounts the Law and the Prophets are said to depend upon these two. *On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*

Fifthly and Lastly, I shall make Application of the Whole.

I begin with the first of these, *viz.* the explication of the duty; what is understood by *Loving our Neighbour as our selves?* and that I may proceed more clearly, I shall briefly consider these Three Things.

First, Who we are to understand by our Neighbour?

Secondly, What by *Loving our Neighbour?*

Thirdly, What by *Loving our Neighbour as our selves?*

And first, by our Neighbour, the object of the duty, we understand the

the whole Society of humane Kind, every Man that lives. Amongst the *Jews* indeed, this word was never understood to comprehend the *Gentiles*, but however it was used indifferently for any *Israelite*, as in the Ninth Commandment, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy Neighbour*; and again, *Thou shalt not stand against the life of thy Neighbour*, that is, of any *Jew*, though not of any Man, for they hated the *Gentiles*, and esteemed them accursed.

Exod. 20.

Lev. 19. 18.

But under the dispensation of the Gospel, our Charity is enlarged to every individual Person, over the face of the whole Earth; and therefore our Saviour declares expressly, that the good Samaritan was Neighbour to the Jew that was wounded, St. Luke 12. 38. And St. Paul reciting this very passage, Rom. 13. 8. changes the word *Neighbour* for that of *Another*, a word of the most indefinite signification of any that is used, *He that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law*, for all duties are comprehended

ded in this saying, namely, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* V. 9.
This for the object of the duty, our *Neighbour, every man.*

I proceed, as I propos'd, in the second place, to consider the nature of the duty it self; What it is, and when a Man may be said to *love his Neighbour?* 2.

And forasmuch as all Mankind are made the object of our love, it would be absurd to explain the nature of that love, by such intimate acts of affection and desire, as arise from a chosen friendship, or a near Relation; but our definition of *universal Love* ought to be very general, that it may be practicable in the utmost, and the true extent thereof, as a duty that reaches to the farthest corners of the Earth, and is exercised upon Persons and Countreys we never saw or heard of; as well as upon those with whom we do converse.

To love our *Neighbour* then, or the whole Society of Humane nature,

ture, wheresoever dispersed and scattered about the World, is, sincerely and heartily to desire and wish the happiness of every Man; to be contented and pleased that our Brethren should share with us, in all the blessings and advantages we are capable of enjoying; to promote our own particular good, with safety and regard to the interest of the whole: In a word, to *Love* our *Neighbour*, is to prosecute a publick interest, to consent and assist, with all our hearts, in the mutual good of one another. That is the Second.

3. I proceed, in the Third Place, to consider what we are to understand by *Loving our Neighbour as our selves*.

To *Love* our Neighbour is the Duty; to love our Neighbour *as* our selves, is the Rule or measure in the practice of it, or the qualification with which it ought to be exercised. And there cannot surely be a better, or a more easie copy proposed to our

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Imitation. A Rule that is so freight and perfect in it self, and impossible to be mistaken by us. Self-love is the first, and most evident principle of our being; every man understands and feels the nature of it, how sincere and pure it is; how vigorous and strong, how constant and immoveable. But thus are we enjoin'd by our Saviour, to love our Neighbour, even *as our selves*; with the same most ardent desires, with the same sincere endeavours, to divert impendent evils, and procure all possible good to others, as we would do to our selves. This in general.

More particularly I shall consider the words, *as thy self*, in a double sense.

First, as obliging us to an intire and perfect Love; that we have a regard to all our Neighbours interests; that we love him in the same *extent* and *latitude* that we love our selves.

Secondly, as obliging us to love him after the same *manner* that we love our

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our selves ; to pursue his good with the same affections and dispositions of mind, that we find in our selves, in the prosecution of our own.

- I. First, to Love our Neighbour as our selves, implies a perfect and intire affection to all his several interests ; that we love him in the same extent and latitude that we love our selves.

All our possibilities of happiness are contain'd and comprehended in these four particulars, viz. *our Soul, our Life, our Estate and Reputation.* Every man has a tender respect for these ; it is the business of our Lives, and the object of our Reason, to become as happy in all these several capacities, as we can ; no man chuses folly or iniquity, disgrace or poverty, diseases or death, simply, and under the *proper notion* of them ; but, according to our measure of knowledge, and the opinion that we have of things, we endeavour to avoid them as *evil*, and procure the good that is contrary thereunto. Wherefore

fore then to love our Neighbour as our selves, according to this interpretation of the words, is to desire his good, as we do our own, in all his several capacities; to be really pleased with his happiness in any of his interests, and ready to assist him according to our power.

First, in the interest of his Soul; a man of universal Charity, envyes no mans parts or Vertue; but is delighted with the Image of God wheresoever he discerns it, with the rays of Wisdom and Righteousness which are scattered amongst men. He is troubled for the wickedness of the wicked, passionately sensible of the horrid consequences of their proceedings; *his eyes, with David, run down with tears, because men keep not the Law of God.* He is ready to communicate his Knowledge, to give his Counsel, to instruct the ignorant, to recal the erring, to reprove the foolish, *καὶ ζήτην τὸ ἑαυτῶν συγγένον*, as S. Paul says of himself, *Not seeking*

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his own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

2. To love our Neighbour *as our selves*, implies a regard to his Life, his Estate and Property. A man of universal Charity is not only just to

Thef. 4. 6 all men, *not defrauding or oppressing his Neighbour in any matter.* Neither is he *indifferent* only to his Neighbours interest, doing no unhandfom thing to any man, but he positively *seeks and studies* his Neighbours weal.

He rejoyceth at any opportunity of doing kindneses to men, he receives and addressees the complaints of the Oppressed, visits the Sick, cloaths the Naked, feeds the Hungry, he is
Rom. 12. *ready to distribute, and is given to hospitality.* According to S. Paul's description of a Charitable man, 1 Cor. 13. (to which we shall have a particular respect, in our present disquisition.) v. 5. *ἡ ἀγάπη τὰ ἑαυτοῦ*, *Charity seeks not his own*, is not circumscribed within the narrow compass of his own advantage; is not frozen into dry sterility, but fruitful and abounding

ding in acts of Mercy and Beneficence. He considers himself, as a member of the one Society of humane Nature; and therefore, as a partner with all the World, he prosecutes a publick interest, is glad of the prosperity of those above him, obliging, by all the arts of Civility, and handsome conversation, to those on a level with him, ready to support the weak, and assist the needy.

And as he is kind to all, so he is not easily provoked into displeasure against any man. He is not quick and forward to discern the injuries and ingratitude of brutish people; he is not apt to aggravate, but excuse a fault; he is ready to believe that it proceeded of mistake, of rashness or inadvertency, rather than of malice or evil will. For so says the Apostle, *ὁ ἀγαπῶν μακροθυμεῖ, ὡς ὁ κύριος ἡμᾶς*, v. 4. Love is of a gentle, easie disposition, believeth, hopeth all things, *ὡς ὁ κύριος ἡμᾶς*, *ὡς ὁ κύριος ἡμᾶς*, he is not presently in a flame of seaver, but represents an injury with a calm and

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ro. 10 12.
 Pet. 4. 8. *steddy mind, and studies no revenge ;
 for Charity will cover the multitude of
 sins.*

3. Thirdly, *To love our Neighbour as
 our selves*, implies a regard to his
 Fame and Reputation. *A good name
 is better than life it self*, says Solomon.
 We prefer it to all other interests
 whatsoever, by the instincts of our
 very Nature. No man can endure
 to be represented ill, because it is
 the parent of contempt and neglect,
 which of all other things is the most
 abhorr'd. And therefore a man of
 universal Charity, will be tender of
 his Neighbours Credit. He hearti-
 ly wishes that all men would behave
 themselves as they ought to do, and
 live with decency, and honour in
 the World. *Charity rejoyceth not
 in the wickedness of the wicked, but re-
 joyceth in the truth*, that is, in the
 upright conversation of men ; so
Grotius upon the place.

He is more ready to discern the
 virtues and excellencies of others,
 than

than his own. He cheerfully acknowledges worth, and allows sufficient praise wheresoever it is due. He puts the best interpretation upon any action that the nature of the thing will bear. He judgeth no man till he understands the course of his Conversation, nor any particular action, till he knows the circumstances and affections of it. (*Affectus tuus imponit nomen operi tuo*, as *S. Ambrose* speaks *de offic.*) He follows the rule of *Epictetus*, τίς τις πολὺν δεινὸν; μὴ εἴπῃς ὅτι καλῶς, ἀλλ' ὅτι πολὺν, does any man drink much wine? say not that he drinks to a debauch, but, simply, that he uses to drink much; because the same action may proceed from a good, as well as from an evil cause. He that strikes another, (as *Simplicius* in his Exposition of the place) may do him good, and he that feeds him may be his enemy: He that steals, as the case may be, may do no ill, and he that relieves another may do unjustly. And therefore a charitable man is ever slow, and sparing

of his censures, *יִלְזֵן וְדָרָא*, he hopeth all things, and is willing to believe the best.

His Ears are shut to idle tales, and evil reflections upon any man; or if he is forced to hear them, he endeavours to stifle the report, and clear the imputation, that, if it be possible, it may stop with him. He is troubled for so much of it as he finds to be true; and with an angry countenance, he drives away the back-biters tongue (saith Solomon) as the North wind driveth away rain. And thus by covering a transgression he seeketh love, *Prov. 17. 9.*

4. Fourthly and Lastly, As the result of all these instances of universal Charity; a man that is really a friend to all, will be courteous and easie, gentle and civil in his outward conversation and deportment.

Haughtiness, or elation of mind, proceeds from an undue account, a distinct unreasonable opinion of our selves above our Neighbours. And
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all morose and supercilious conversation, are the effects of conceitedness and pride, of discontent and jealousy, that we are not valued according to the price we have set upon our selves. But a man that is frank and ingenuous, *that loves his Neighbour as himself*, treats and uses every man with the chearfulness and civility of a friend. His own desires and expectations from his betters, are the measure of his deportment towards those below him.

He then that *loves his Neighbour as himself*, will be easie of access, courteous and sincere in speech, civil and obliging in all his conversation with him. Since he is a friend to all, he will not ruffle, provoke, or discourage any man; *ἡ ἀγάπη χερσὺς ἐστίν*, Charity is benign, yielding and complaisant, knows no *supercilium*, *ἡ ἐπιφύλαξις*, he is not full of himself, *he is not puffed up*. V. 4.

This is, to love our Neighbour as our selves, as we understand it of loving him in all the several instances
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wherein we love our selves ; comprehended chiefly under his Soul, his Life, his Estate and Reputation.

2. But, Secondly, the Duty, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, not only obliges us to have a true respect to all his interests, but to love him *also after the same manner*, that we love our selves ; to pursue his good, with the same affections, and dispositions of mind, which we find in our selves in the prosecution of our own.

It is always to be supposed that the Rule or Exemplar is more excellent than the Copy. The love of a Man to himself is so unmixt and pure, the unity so perfect, that it is not possible he should confer it upon another in the same degree, unless he could really and naturally unite him to himself.

Thus God Almighty is proposed to us, the most imperfect of rational Beings, as the Pattern of our Virtue,

tue, *Be ye Holy as God is Holy*, says ¹ Pet. 1.
St. Peter: Be ye perfect as your Hea- ^{24.}
venly Father is perfect, *St. Matt. 5. ult.*
 But in these, and several other places, we must not understand the Particle *as*, as denoting an *exact Identity*, but only that our Principle be *sincere*, our vertue *true*, though far inferiour in degree.

Wherefore in our present case, the qualification of the duty, *as thy self*, though it may not import an equality of love, which is impossible; yet, at least, it signifies that we love our Neighbour with the same kind of affections, and dispositions of mind, with which we love our selves: and therefore *Erasmus* expounds the words by *perinde ac seipsum*, in like manner as thou lovest thy self.

First, With the greatest Tender-
 ness and Sense; every Man is affected intimately with his own affairs, he feels every motion that concerns them, because he knows he must
 enjoy,

enjoy, or endure the event of his designs. And thus we are enjoyn'd to love our Neighbour, *as our selves*; Not only to do him no hurt in any interest, neither yet to do him service only; but to be inwardly *mo-ved* and *affected* with his case; that we be Men of *Bowels*, apt to be wrought into pity, compassion, and desire to do him good, into Joy and delight at any prosperous event.

1 Pet. 3.
22.

2. Secondly, We love and pursue our own particular happiness with solicitude and diligence. Our sensible apprehension, and innate desire of good, provoke and encourage our most earnest endeavours, (according to our knowledge) to promote it. No Man is indifferent and cold in his own pursuits. We think no pains too great, we leave no stone unturn'd, we grudge no present self-denial, in the prosecution of our own designs. Thus also *thou shalt love thy Neighbour even*

as *thy self*, with fervency of affection, with a Zeal for his Good. It is not a tender expression, a friendly wish, an unwilling word, a cold essay, that fulfils the duty; but a chearful service, ready motions, effectual assistances: that we be patient to hear, and willing to understand and be concern'd, in a case that is worthy of us: that we lay it to our heart, and put it forward, according to discretion, by our counsel, our friend, our person, our purse, as the occasion may require, for thus we love our selves *with passion and solicitude.*

Thirdly, With constancy, and everlasting affection. Self-love can never abate or cool; every Man pursues what he thinks to be good, to the last: it is a natural principle, an essential property of our Being, which can never be extinguished. But thus are we obliged to love our Neighbour, even *as our selves*, all the days of our life. This duty of uni-

universal love is never perfected. It is not enough that we have been useful and beneficial in some particular instance: but we must never stop, never contract our selves, never imagine that we have paid this debt of universal Charity; but so long as we have ability and opportunity, so long as we have objects before us, that is, so long as we live, we must dilate and expatiate our selves to the benefit of our Neighbour; for *Thou shalt love him as thy self*; as well in all the several instances wherein thou lovest thy self, as with the same affections and dispositions of thy mind; with tenderness and passion, with fervency and Zeal, with steddiness and constancy.

And thus, as briefly as I could, I have explained the duty of universal Love; and by comparing the temper of our Souls, and the course of our conversation, with the rules and measures I have now laid down, we may know infallibly, whether we
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are endowed with this grace of Charity, or no ; whether we love our neighbour as our selves.

Are we pleased with the practice of Vertue, or any worthy quality, wheresoever we discern it ? or rather are not the infirmities, nay, the debaucheries of Men, our delight and sport ?

Do we govern our desires and aimes by the rules of equity and love ? Do we use no tricks, no mines, no unhandsome arts, to circumvent another ?

Are we content that every Man should prosper and be happy ? Are we ready for every good work ? *Do the Loins of the poor bleſs us, are they warmed with the fleeces of our wool ?* Job 31. 20. Do we govern our Authority over inferiour Men with Justice ? *Do we not trouble our own fleſh ?* Prov. 11. 17. *Do we not rob the poor, becauſe he is poor, and oppreſs the afflicted in the gate ?* 22. 22.

May it not be ſaid of us, as Solomon complains, (Eccleſ. 4. 1.) *On the*

the side of the oppressor there was power, but the oppressed had no Comforter.

Are we willing to discern, and praise the vertues of our Neighbour, and to hide his faults?

Can we chearfully hear the Commendation of another, and not embase the Character by some malicious insinuation?

Pro. 21. 10. Does not our Soul desire evil, and does our neighbour find any favour in our eyes?

Are we civil and ingenuious in our Carriage towards all? Are we meek and approachable, sincere and plain, gentle and easie to be intreated?

Are we never weary of well-doing, never discouraged by our own mistakes in objects, by the tricks and deceits that may, sometimes, be put upon us, by the ingratitude of those we have obliged; or the disappointments of those from whom we had expectation; by the errours that a Zealous Charity may run into, or the

the censures of unworthy Men, to which it may sometimes be exposed? Do we centre in a sense of Duty, and the sincerity of our principle and design, resolving never to look back or faint, but persevere in a steady course of universal Charity to the end? This is *to love thy neighbour as thy self.*

And so I proceed, as I proposed, in the second place, to persuade you to the practice of this duty of universal Charity, by certain motives and encouragements, couched and implied in these words, *Thy neighbour.*

We are obliged to prosecute a publick interest, to be kind and compassionate to all, because we are *neighbours*; and that *implies,*

First, The Necessity of the thing: *To love our neighbour as our selves,* is our real Interest, because of our Co-habitation and necessary converse with one another.

No affection or property of humane nature is more evident, than a disposition to Society.

Our

2.

1.

Our innate impresses of natural Affection, Goodness and Compassion ; our passions of Desire and Love, our abilities of inventing useful Art, our faculty of Speech, which is peculiar to Man, and what only serves the purposes of Society, do all suppose it : and the impotence and inability of man, in a loose and separate state, to perfect his capacities, to satisfy his natural desires, nay, to support and defend his life, demonstrate it.

But without an hearty consent in the mutual good of one another, without policy and a publick interest, Society would be dangerous and useless, black and uncomfortable solitude our only refuge, τὸ κοινὸν οὐδὲν, τὸ ἰδιὸν διασπᾶ. Reason, without Goodness, is mischievous subtlety, and would prove the greatest instrument of evil in the World. The fierceness of the Leopard, and the strength of the Lyon, would not be so dreadful as the understanding of Rational Nature devoid of Justice. Every
man

man would be against his Brother, our life would be a state of war, a continual hostility. Here an attempt by force, there by subtlety and circumvention, every where distrust and fears, guards and preparations of defence.

So that according to the Principles of our Nature, and the design of our Being, we are one Society, one interest, one common happiness is amongst us all.

And no man that separates himself from the Community, and proposeth with himself, to stand on his own legs, and acquire whatsoever pleases him, by *any means*, without respect to others, can ever prosper or be safe; because he can never hope to be endured. Every man has a tender respect for his Life, his Honour, and his Interest, which, whensoever they are forcibly invaded, will provoke him to retaliate the injury. No man can expect with reason, to be treated more civilly himself, than he treats his neighbour. Such a conceit

ceit is Vanity, there is no foundation for such a deference in Nature: but he raises the whole Society against himself; and how he should acquit himself in such an unequal combat, is not easie to imagine. And therefore, *Qui se amat, hunc, & alios sic amare,* (says Seneca) *nec sibi sed toti genitum se credere mundo.* He that loves himself will love his neighbour, and consider himself as born for the benefit of the World. He that hates his brother, says S. John, (1 Ep. 2. 11.) walks in darkness, but he that loves his brother abideth in the light. The Metaphor of light and darkness, signifies the knowledge, or ignorance, of our interest: the selfish man is as wretched as those who are blind, or travel in the dark, exposed to grievous evils, dangerous precipices, sharp and rugged ways, But he that loveth his brother abideth in the light; acts wisely, proceeds with confidence and good success, lives safely and securely, καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ἰκτὺς, there is no danger of his stumbling, of

Epist. 6.
Lip. in Loc.

of his offending others, or being himself offended.

The Second motive to universal Love and Charity, couch'd and implied in these words, *thy Neighbour*, is the propriety in, and the relation that we have to one another. He is *thy Neighbour*. 2.

All Mankind are of the same extraction and original; sons of the same God. *Uno patre conditi, una matre tanquam fratres uterini editi*, as the Father speaks (*S. Ambrose*) stamped with the same Divine Image, equally inspirited with the breath of God. The meanest man in the world agrees with him that is the greatest, in that that is truly Great and Noble in him, his Reason and Understanding.

Wherefore then, since we are all children of the same Family, and, which is more, professors of the same most holy Faith, *Citizens with the Saints, of the household of Faith*, (*Eph. 2. 19.*) Nay farther, since our union

is more intimate, and we are *members one of another*, (Eph. 4. 25.) we ought to *love as brethren*; to sympathize as parts of the same body, to be easily touch'd with a sense of each others evils, forasmuch as the case of our Neighbour is, in a moral sense, our own; and we are stupid, if we neglect it. There is something of our selves in every man; the same Divine Principle inlivens us, the same blood runs in all our veins: We have therefore a propriety, a *real interest* in one another. So that to *love thy Neighbour* is indeed to *love thy self*: That is the second.

3. Thirdly, From the necessity of a publick spirit in order to our Happiness, and from the Relation that we stand in to our Neighbour, arises another motive to universal Charity, namely, the beauty, the harmony, and the pleasure of the thing. Whatsoever actions necessarily tend to the good of man, and are agreeable to the Laws and impressions of humane

humane Nature, must of necessity be full of ease and pleasure. The Soul exults, and enjoys her self, in the practice of them, as her *proper* acts and *operations*. As, on the other hand, an irrational course of proceeding is unnatural, and therefore a violence to our frame and constitution, as poyson or the sharpest pains are to the body.

But to love our Neighbour as our selves, is not so properly a rational act, a thing that is fit to be done, as, *Reason it self*, our essential difference, *our very form*.

To pursue the satisfaction of natural desires by *strength*, by *craft*, or by any means, is the property of Beings meerly sensitive. But there is no other notion of humane Nature, than that of *making a distinction of actions*; nor of Rational Ends, but *Good*; nor of Good, but *publick Interest*. And therefore universal Love, or a regard to others, as well as to our selves, is the perfection of our Being. For let our distinctions,

otherwise, be never so many, or so great, yet if our *Will by nature*, be *unbounded*, there is no *Essential* difference between us and Brutes. Hence *Love*, according to *St. John*, is the very definition of *God* himself, who is the standard of Rational perfection: 1 Joh. 4. 8. *Beloved, Let us love one another, for God is Love.*

How easie then would all Men be in this their most Divine and perfect state? What a confidence would Love create, what delight, what trust, what assurance, what a free and cheerful intercourse? No Man would be diffident of his Neighbour, as averse to his interest, or cross him as an enemy; but we should enjoy the unvaluable blessings of society with ease and peace.

But a Man of a shrivell'd, narrow spirit, that is wholly resolved into himself, proceeds against universal Law and Right; Rows against the stream, with difficulty and fear, with perplexity and danger: he cannot live

live alone, and yet he can never be sure of the good will of those with whom he must converse: he is always practising hypocrisie, and must accomplish himself with arts of disguise, and tricks of deceit, that undiscern'd, which is impossible, he may deceive the World. He is under a perpetual constraint in the management of his conversation, for fear he should be betrayed into that shame, confusion and hazard, which attend the detection of base designs, and which they deserve, who depart from this Royal Law, of *Love thy Neighbour as thy self*: a Law which in the practice of it would put a new face upon the World, would banish gnawing cares and angry fears, and give sincerity and chearfulness to every countenance. There could be no misery amongst Men. We should all be happy in one another, and anticipate that concord, harmony, and love, which are supposed to constitute the joys of Heaven.

And thus I have explain'd the duty of universal Love, and considered the beauty and necessity thereof, from the words, *Thy Neighbour. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.*

3. It now remains that I should represent the likeness of this Command, to the former, that of Love to God, *and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.*

1. First, In the nature of the duty, they both oblige us to the same *office of Love.*

2. Secondly, In extent and amplitude; they are both comprehensive duties, the former containing all the severals of the first, the latter of the second Table.

3. Thirdly, In that they suppose, and are predicated of each other, *He that loveth God will love his Brother also,* 1 Joh. 4. 20. As *Philo* truly says of moral vertues in the general, they *follow* and are *linked* together.

As

As also, Lastly, I should have considered, both the construction, and the reason of this expression, *On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*

Κρίμαςται, They consent and agree with these. St. Paul interprets the word by ἀνακεφαλαιῶται, Rom. 13. 9. *If there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* This is the end, the scope, and the design of the Law and the Prophets. All the Precepts of the Jewish, and the Christian Religion have their ground and existence in these two, and into these they are finally resolved; out of these universals, flow all the particulars of both Religions.

And therefore for a Conclusion of the whole, I shall only pray to God, *Use.* that he would affect our minds with a sense of his goodness to us, who has given us a Religion so easie to be learn'd and understood.

If

If we heartily believe the Being of a God, we cannot but desire his favour; and to such as these, no blessing can be compared with a clear revelation, without distinct and certain knowledge of our duty; because we then are free from anxious fears, and doubts about the nature of Religion; We aim at a steady end, without the mazes, and uncertain wandrings of Imagination. We run within the lines, the ground is set out, and the Goal is before our eyes. Our whole intention may be taken up in accomplishing our minds with the love of God and Man; the road to happiness is plain and easie. *This is the Law and the Prophets.*

And O! that we could be persuaded to lay aside all false opinions of Religion; and believe our Saviour, and accept him upon his own conditions: that we would pursue the favour of God and everlasting happiness in the way of univer-

universal Charity. For, believe it,
 no Faith, no Creed, no Church-
 Communion, no outward Sancti-
 mony, no external Piety, without
 the Love of God, and Man, will a-
 vail us any thing in the Day of
 Judgment; No, though we should
 be honoured with the power of
 working Miracles; and should cast
 out Devils in the Name of *Christ*,
 yet unless we cloath the Naked,
 visit the Sick, assist whom we may,
 and pity all, we shall surely be shut
 out, with, *Depart from me, I know
 ye not*: Matt. 7. ult.

Let us therefore be perswaded,
 since so much depends upon it, to
 set our selves industriously upon the
 practice of these Duties, that we
 may procure to our selves univer-
 sal love and peace; the good will
 of God and Man in this present
 life, and everlasting Glory in the
 World to come.

To which, God of his mercy
 bring

(146)

bring us all, for Jesus Christ his
sake the Righteous, to whom with
the Father and the Holy Ghost be
all Honour, Glory, Praise, and Love,
now and for evermore. *Amen.*

Rom]

Rom. xii. 21.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

TO gratifie the present passion or desire by fraud, by force, or by any means whatsoever, without respect to right or wrong, to good or evil, is the essential difference of irrational brutal Nature. But to look before us, to act for the sake of ends ; to do, or to forbear, as the event and consequence of the thing shall appear to be good or evil to us ; is the distinction, the property, indeed, the definition of reasonable creatures. But because the reasonable faculty in man (who is the most imperfect in the kind) is obscur'd and prejudic'd, by the unaccount-

countable union of the Soul and Body, in our present state; therefore God, who is Wisdom it self, has at several times, but at last, and especially by his Son, in that most perfect institution of Reason, as well as of Religion, contain'd in his holy Gospel, ~~alifted~~ ^{lifted} our weakness, clear'd our notions; ~~drawn out and set on~~ ^{drawn out and set on} work those eternal principles of Truth and Goodness, which may be undiscern'd, but can never be separated from our own minds.

And amongst all the excellent rules of Wisdom and Practice therein contained, there is none of so high, so exalted a nature as the love of Enemies; for this alone is proposed under the style and character of *Divine Perfection*. *Be ye therefore perfect as your father which is in heaven is perfect*, S. Matth. 5. ult. A Precept which, through the prejudice of our passion, and the depth of its reason, is not easily understood, hardly received, more hardly practis'd; yet

in truth it is every way our interest,
as well as an indispensable duty,
and therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. V. 10, 31.

The Judaizing Christians, and the *Gnosticks*, had extremely perverted the Christian Religion, by asserting the obligation of the Ceremonial Law; the lawfulness of a dissembled Apostasie, and a liberty of indulging any Lust or Vice we shall be addicted to. Now to hinder the spreading of these pernicious Doctrines, and to assert the Truth and Purity of the Christian Religion, against those false and spurious accounts, which they had given of it, *S. Paul* insinuates, is his chief design in this his Epistle to the *Romans*, Ch. I. 16.

*Rom. I. 1.
c. 12. Mag.
Eccl. 1.
His. Cent.
1. 1. 2. 4. 5.*

And First, he shews that the Ceremonial Law was but a type or shadow I.

shadow of a more perfect institution of Religion, which in after time should be established: *Ch. 2.*

2. That that time is now accomplish'd, and the Ceremonial Law abolished; and that therefore we are now obliged to those more perfect and substantial duties, which were signified and represented under the Types and Figures of the Law: *Ch. 8.*

3. Finally, That Christianity consists in the reformation of our lives, in rectifying the evil dispositions of our Souls, in conforming our affections, desires, and actions, to the most pure and perfect Laws thereof.

And therefore, as the use of the whole Discourse, *I beseech you Brethren, by the mercies of God, Ch. 12.*

1. *That ye present your bodies, all your bodily corrupt affections and desires, a Living Sacrifice, a whole burnt-*

burnt offering to God ; That ye intirely resign your selves, and suffer your Religion to have its last design and end upon you : *And be not conformed to this World,* (for so the Apostle proceeds to particulars) *But be ye transform'd by the renewing of your minds ;* with fervent Piety and Devotion towards God, *V. 11.* with sincere and universal Charity towards Men, extending even to the love of Enemies, in the words of my Text, *For if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink, &c. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* These words are a Precept of universal obligation, which concerns our behaviour, under injuries received, *Be not overcome of evil ; and our deportment towards those who injure us : but overcome evil with good.*

V. 2.

And first, we are instructed how to behave our selves under injuries received, *Be not overcome of evil.* We

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are

are not obliged to a Stoical insensibility ; To destroy our Passions is no perfection, but a debility, and sickness of the mind : but to command them, to keep them within their bounds, to exercise them upon proper Objects, and to a just degree, is the honour of a Man, and the duty of a Christian. The Command it self, *Be not overcome of evil*, supposes, and allows a *sense* of the injury, but obliges us to govern our resentments by the rules of reason ; to mold our spirits into a temper of meekness, kindness, and condescension ; that we may be then most pleasant to our selves, when we stand in the greatest need of counsel and advice ; that no provocation may be able to discompose our minds, or transport us into freakish, indecent words, or actions, much less into meditations of Revenge : But that we receive the injury with Patience, consider it sedately, construe it fairly, excuse it
 inge-

ingenuously, or if the malice be too plain to be hid, then to refer the Judgment of your cause to God: *Be not overcome of evil. But overcome evil with good.* In the former clause, *τὸ κακόν*, *Be not overcome of evil*, is understood of the injury received; but evil in the latter clause, *overcome evil with good*, has respect to the injurious person. Conquer your enemy by kindness; bring him to confession of his baseness, to repentance, to offers of satisfaction, to the very same submission, even from his heart, which you would propose to your self to force him to, if you could conquer, and disarm him in the open Field. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head; be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* And thus much for the Explication of the duty, and the sense of the words: By which we may see, that it has no

relation at all to Government, or the punishment of Offenders against the peace of the publick ; Nor to the resentments of Princes, or the Wars and Peace of Nations. Nor lastly, to the defence of our Persons, our lives and fortunes, against the assaults and out-rages of wicked men. These are Considerations of another nature, with which our present argument is not in the least concern'd. But the Duty of the Text concerns the moderation of our Passions, under any opprobrious words, or ill designs, which have been spoke, or form'd against us : and obliges us to forbear revenge ; to seek no private, illegal satisfaction for any such injury received ; that we do not therefore become his enemy, because he seems to be ours ; that we harbour no ill will, ill wishes, or ill designs against him, but endeavour to reconcile him to a state of amity and friendship, by a readiness to oblige and serve him. *Be*

not

not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

And for the clearer illustration of this most perfect Precept of our Religion, I shall briefly consider these Four Things.

First, *The indispensable Obligation of the Duty, by the express Command of God.* 1.

Secondly, *The fitness and necessity of the thing considered in it self.* 2.

Thirdly, *The rewards and benefits, which will accompany the practice of it.* 3.

Fourthly, and Lastly, *The possibility of performing it.* 4.

And first of all, This Duty, *That we be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good,* is indispensably required. 1.

It is not to be understood as a Council of perfection, as a glorious

- unattainable temper, which we are not obliged to pursue; but it is a positive Duty, an express Command, in which we are no more at liberty, than in any other precept of our Religion. S. Paul designedly in this, and the following Chapters, collects and repeats the principal duties of Christianity, or *what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.* And amongst the rest he mentions the *love of enemies*: and upon this he insists and stays for several Verses, as being a duty more unwillingly received, and inforces at last, in the words of my Text, *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* And our Saviour himself, in the 5. of S. Matth. proposes and urges, the *love of our enemies*, after the same manner, and under the same form, as he does the rest of his precepts, without any dispensation or indulgence whatsoever, v. 44. *But I say unto you, love your enemies.*

Indeed

Indeed there is no one duty of our Religion more strictly enjoined, more frequently inculcated, or press'd by a greater variety of cogent arguments, than that before us.

The very Spirit of Christianity is meekness, and mutual condescension; and therefore we are obliged to put away all *anger, wrath and malice*; to suffer all things, to be kind, to think no evil: to be patient towards all men, to render to no man evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. To put on as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind; meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. And all this is enforced upon us, by the terrible sanction of God's everlasting anger towards us: For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly father forgive you, S. Matth. 6. 15. 'Nothing, says S. Chrysostom, is more

Col. 3. 8.

Jam. 1. 19

1 Cor. 13. 5

1 Pet. 3. 9

Col. 3. 12

Eph. 4. 32

Hom. 17. 'odious to God, than a man that is
 in Genes. 'thirsty of revenge; the mischief of
 'this sin is such, that it deprives a man
 'of the benefit of God's mercy, and will
 'not suffer it to have any place upon him.

And thus we see, that to restrain our Passion, to be meek in Spirit, slow of resentment, dead to revenge, easie to forgive, and ready to oblige an enemy, is an indispensable duty of our Religion.

If it be objected, that our Saviour seems to curse the Cities of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida, because they withstood his doctrine, S. Matth. 11. *Wo unto you Chorazin, wo unto Bethsaida, and thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell.* Or that S. Paul cursed Alexander upon a private personal injury offer'd to himself, in his Second Epistle to Tim. 4. 14. *the Lord reward him according to his works.* Or that the most holy Saints have taken a liberty of imprecating evil upon their enemies, Psal. 109. *They*
 com-

compassed me about with words of hatred, they rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my good will: let his days be few, and let another take his office: let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow; let his children be vagabonds and beg their bread, let the extortioner consume all that he has: as he loved cursing, so let it come upon him.

If the practice, I say, of our Saviour, and of those holy Saints, seem contrary to the precepts of *love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you.* S. Augustine's resolution of that question is sufficient, 'who observes how common it is in Scripture, to foretel the event of future evils, under the form of an imprecation. So that all such places as I have now recited, are to be understood, not as the wishes of the speaker, but as Prophecies of what will certainly come upon them. And as for that of S. Paul, He observes that he says
'not

‘not reddat, let the Lord, but reddet dominus, the Lord will reward him for it. There is therefore no indulgence to be found, no dispensation allowed; it is positively required, *That we be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

2. And indeed, if it be well considered, *there is nothing more fit and reasonable in it self*; and this was the second head of discourse proposed.

As the benefits of cohabitation and Society are great, so has it also this inevitable inconvenience, that amongst so many persons, of different humors, diverse interests, and various designs; Justice and Honesty will be violated, private and open injuries will be offered; there are always some that will be ready to build their reputation, or fortune, upon the ruine of other men. Even common Conversation cannot be so
cauti-

cautiously maintain'd, so discreetly manag'd, but disgusts and piques will often happen. It is impossible then but offences will come. The Air will as soon be fixed, and the Sea reduced to rest; as humane Conversation should be altogether free from occasions of offence. Either therefore we must learn this lesson of meekness, and mutual condescension, or prepare our selves for a continual state of war.

If we can neither hide our resentments prudently, nor bear them patiently, we may lay aside all hope of living peaceably in the World. Our whole life will be spent in vindicating our real, or supposed injuries one upon another. Every man would be against his Neighbour, till, in time, that kind would be destroyed. So that if we were not obliged to restrain our Passion, and pass over injuries by the Laws of our Religion; the very necessities of our Nature and Being, would direct us to it. And there-

therefore, a wise man, says Solomon, *deferreth his anger, it is his glory to pass over a transgression*, Prov. 19. 11.

Indeed Revenge is the most unreasonable thing in the World. It is contrary to all the principles of Justice and equity, that any man (where it may possibly be avoided) should be Party, Witness, Judge, and Executioner in his own Cause. Every man is partial to himself; and we are then most weak and unfit to judge, when we are ruffled and provoked: that little stock of Reason that we are masters of, is apt to be overborn by the Violence of Passion. Even *Jupiter* himself, though he might dart his favourable rays of his own accord, yet he could not send out his Thunderbolts, without the consent and Counsel of the gods. Indeed, the imperfection of the humane nature is such, that it is not fit to be trusted with a liberty of *revenging injuries* at discretion. Such a power can never be proper, never
safe,

safe, but in the hands of God, whose vengeance is, and to whom it belongs *Rom. 12.* to repay: Who is infinite in knowledge, and cannot be mistaken in a circumstance; who is infinitely just and good, and therefore loves, and pities the offender. That is the Second.

And as the return of good for evil is indispensibly required, as it is fit and reasonable in it self, so shall it also be rewarded with Victory and Honour. And this was the third Head of Discourse proposed.

The very Command it self, *That we overcome evil with good*, is an unquestionable security to us, that by returning good for evil, we shall surely conquer, and subdue the Injurer.

So that the reward of meekness, or a patient suffering of injuries, is not only that general peace of Conscience, and tranquillity of mind, which accompany the practice of all
Vertue,

Vertue, and which will especially
act. mo. 21 arise from the submission of our will
 to God, in this most difficult in-
 stance, so contrary to our own cor-
 rupt desires: nor is it onely that
 great reward in Heaven, which our
 Saviour has promised to those who
 patiently bear reproach, *St. Matt. 5.*
John 16. ad which changes the injury into a Crown,
1 Cor. 6. and makes us like to God, as *St. Chry-*
ostom observes.

But the benefit of Patience, and
 the Reward of returning good for
 evil, is present and more immedi-
 ate; all that is designed or hoped
 for by revenge, will more proba-
 bly, and far more effectually be
 obtained, by meekness and forbear-
 ance.

What is it that we propose to
 our selves by revenge? Is it the
 Vindication of our honour, that we
 may teach the Aggressor how much
 he was mistaken in his Man? that
 we may be known hereafter to be
 Men of spirit? and procure to our
 selves

selves respect, or fear at least? or, is it the reparation of the Injury sustained; and the prevention of the like attempts hereafter, by returning a greater load of evil upon the injurer, than he had brought on us? Why, both these ends of honour and satisfaction, will be more commodiously attained by courtesie and kindness, than by deep resentments and revenge.

For suppose you have success, suppose you subdue your enemy, expose him, afflict him, bring him on his knees; yet if the account be fairly adjusted, you will find yourself as far from any real satisfaction now, as you was before; because it cost you more than it was worth.

You say, says Seneca, you cannot bear an injury; it is false: He that can bear anger, can bear an injury. There cannot be a greater torment to one's self, than a thirst of Revenge. What tumult and confusion does it raise in our minds? what horrid apprehen-

prehensions, what impatience of desire, what a perfect discontent, till our end be accomplisht? How is a Man unmann'd, and forsaken of himself, that is under the power of this unreasonable passion? How do the thoughts of the Person disorder him? How is he struck at the sight of him? his Eyes distorted, his Visage changed, his Joynts ineebled, as if he were acted by an evil spirit? *He that nourishes a desire of re-*

venge, says St. Chrysostom, carries a
Hom. 41. in
All. Apost. Liſtor always about him, to scourge
and lash him, a glowing fire to tor-
ment him, that will never suffer his
Soul to rest. So true is that of St.

offic. 21.1. Ambrose, Vincitur ab inimico qui se
vindicat, non vincit. He is subdued
 and conquered, that revenges him-
 self upon his adversary. So that,
 upon the matter, there is no sub-
 stantial satisfaction to be hoped for
 by revenge; Nor indeed any Ho-
 nour, Esteem, or true Reputation to be
 gained thereby.

All

All that we propose by Revenge, is to approve our selves to be Men of tenderness and resolution, that we expect to be used with caution and civility ; that we are no vile, or abject persons, no proper subjects of derision and contempt : and this, it may be, you may make good.

But, did not the Violence of your Passion, did not your Resentment, with all your practice upon it, *dishonour* and expose you more, than the Conquest of your Enemy could do you Credit?

Is any thing so contemptible as a Man in passion? *St. Chrysostom* (as well as *Seneca*) compares him to a mad Man. *The symptoms*, says he, of madness and anger are the same: a bold and threatening countenance, restless and involuntary motions, change of colour, deep and frequent sighs are the signs of madness; and Heat of blood, Redness of face, trembling Lips, gnashing Teeth, Convulsive Joynts, abrupt and stammering

M Speech,

Sen. de Ira
L. 1. C. 1. Speech, with an horrid ugly Visage,
 are the symptoms and effects of anger.

And therefore he concludes, that it
 is hard to say, whether anger be a
 Vice more detestable, or more de-
 form'd.

If therefore, whilst a Man asserts
 his courage, he exposes his Wisdom,
 it may easily be resolv'd, what right,
 upon the matter, he has done to
 his honour.

But after all, the success is doubt-
 ful, the design may be detected, the
 Revenge prevented, the enemy more
 insolent, injuries repeated, and your
 Honour more exposed: so that the
 study of Revenge is very uncertain
 in the event; or if it succeeds, the
 satisfaction that it brings, is as dear,
 as it is imperfect.

But by meekness, bearing patient-
 ly, and returning good for evil, we
 shall attain our ends upon our ene-
 my, more easily, more certainly,
 and with better reputation. For
 Patience under an injury received,
 lessens

lessens the evil of it to ones self. The evil of an injury consists in our sense, and apprehension of it; but if we are not affected by it, it loses its edge and force upon us. Resentment certainly inflames, but never cures the Wound: it aggravates the pain, and afflicts us more than the injury it self. *If we sit down with patience,* says Tertullian, *We are not hurt; and if we are not hurt, there is then no occasion of Revenge.*

Besides, as patience prevents the evil of an injury to ones self, so is it also a great and a real revenge upon our enemy: His design is to discompose and vex us, to irritate and provoke us; but if we contemn and slight his essays, his end is frustrated, and he is the greatest sufferer, in that he cannot move us. *The Anvil* Seri.
suffers nothing by the heavy blows that are laid upon it, but the hand of him that strikes is benum'd and strain'd.

This then is certainly the noblest; as well as the strictest satisfaction we can take; this is the surest proof that we are men of honour. To bluster and be dreadful, is no perfection or commendation in any Being; perfect motions are easie and familiar, but whirlwinds and earthquakes are therefore dreadful, because they are unnatural. Steddi-ness, immobility, not to be affected by any thing without it self, are instances of perfection. The higher and more perfect Regions are undisturbed, free from tumults, clouds and tempests. They are the inferior Regions, that are affected by every vapour.

He then is the brave and gallant Man, that despises an injury, and scorns to *submit* to an affront. *Quem injuria non incurvat.* But to study Revenge, is to complain and sink under a wound: it is at the best, but a refuge of shame, and the sanctuary of a doubtful reputation. Nor is it honour.

honourable only in it self, strictly and rationally considered; but our enemy shall understand it so; He shall as really submit himself, be as effectually subdued, by the return of good for evil, as if we had intirely subjected him by force: for so says the Apostle in the Verse before my Text; *if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst give him drink: for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.* By such an unexpected kindness, we shall work upon him, mollifie and melt him into Repentance, submission, and desires of an everlasting friendship. By Revenge a quarrel is prolonged; but Patience, and the return of good for evil, are apt to work upon the roughest temper. The sweetness and gentleness of the humane Nature are lost and hid, for a time, under a cloud of Passion and Anger; but by yielding to it, by giving room, we shall dissipate the vapour, and the man will return to himself again.

And thus it appears that the practice of Meekness, Patience, and forgiving Injuries, how difficult soever it may seem to persons under the prejudice of false opinions, and the power of evil habits, is nevertheless our interest and our honour, as well as an indispensable duty: so true is that of Solomon, *He that is*

Pro. 14. 29. *slow to anger, is of great understanding.*

16. 32. *And again, He that is slow to wrath is better than the mighty; and he that rules his spirit, than he that takes a City.* That is the Third.

4. *And if to overcome our enemy by kindness be commanded of God, if it be reasonable in it self, if it be truly great and noble; if it be rewarded with Victory and Honour, it cannot be doubted, but, Fourthly and Lastly, it is possible to be performed.*

*Tis true, our mind is under great disadvantages in our present state, and therefore we can never hope to attain

attain the perfection of any Vertue; but we are as free in respect of our irascible passions, as we are in the rest: We are no more driven or necessitated in this, than in any other of the powers and faculties of our Souls; and therefore undoubtedly we may restrain this passion, in a good degree, if we are not wanting to our selves. Our passions are subject naturally, by the design and order of our frame; and therefore it cannot be so difficult, as it is apprehended, to oblige them to their proper places. They are the servants of our Understandings, and although it is impossible, indeed unnecessary, to destroy them, because our Passions and our Reason, though they are really distinct, yet they are never to be separated. To resolve of an object that it is evil, and to detest and hate it, are acts of the mind, form'd, of necessity, together. Yet if we be careful we may maintain the precedence and

authority of our reason, for in this consists that Dominion over our selves, our choice, and actions, which give us the denomination of reasonable creatures.

The truth of it is, we are apt to indulge and nourish this Passion of Anger, we are willing to believe that it becomes us to be tender and sensible, fierce and implacable; to slight the most valuable thing, even Life it self, and sacrifice it to a *pun-tilio* of mistaken Honour. And now that we have cherished this Passion for many years, exercised our selves continually in it, yielded to all the extravagancies of it; now we hope to excuse our selves, by pleading the impossibility of restraining it. Difficult indeed we have made it to our selves, but the difficulty is superinduced and adventitious; and therefore still, if we would take the pains to master our Spirit, as perhaps we have done to
elate

elate and exalt it, we may be successful in a good degree. *Resolution*, says *Seneca*, upon the like occasion, *will pass over all impediments*. No affections of the mind are so fierce and obstinate, so much themselves, but they may be tamed by Discipline. Reason duly exercised, will conquer any passion. In our present case, Let a Man but consider, till his mind be affected with the evil, and unreasonableness of Revenge, and he will be quickly able to forbear it.

*Sen. de Ira,
Lib. 1.*

Let him that is tempted to anger, say, (it is *St. Chrysostom's* advice.) *What can I do to you, both my tongue and my hands are tied up by another*; and this would be matter of Philosophy, a temper to them both.

*Hom. in
Job. c. 1.*

Let him meditate on his own infirmities, and abate a little, of that too high opinion, which perhaps he may have of himself.

Let

Let him remember how unguarded his own behaviour many time may be ; how much he may stand in need of forgiveness himself.

Let him consider, that no Man is invincible, that he may meet with those that are as obstinate and wilful as himself. And when once these causes, namely, Pride, Self-will, and Humour are removed, we shall return of course to the Lenity and Goodness of the humane nature: a great many injuries will vanish into nothing; Great ones will appear indifferent, and the greatest may be easily supported.

Finally, Let us set before us the Examples of great and holy Men, who when their enemies have been under their power, when they might have taken their utmost revenge upon them, have pass'd over all their injuries and affronts with neglect
and

and pity. And thus we may encourage our selves by the experience and success of others, as well as by the reason of the thing. Time would fail me to tell of *Joseph, David, Job, the Publican, St. Stephen,* and the rest, whose stories are recorded in the Holy Scripture; it is enough, that we look unto *Jesus the author and finisher of our faith,* who *for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despised the shame; and prayed for those who insulted over him, and slew him, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* *If you say,* says Saint *Augustine,* *How shall I ever hope to do as our Lord has done? Consider where he did it, on the Cross, where he acted altogether as a man, and proposed himself to our imitation.* Hcb. 12.1.
T. 10. 24.
ser. in Rog.
Serm. 1.

And now, I hope, upon the strength of so many considerable Motives, we may be all perswaded, at least, to attempt the mastery of
our

our selves. The end is so considerable, and the means so reasonable and likely to attain it, that our best endeavours will be both justified, and rewarded. It may be difficult at first, to change a habit, that is riveted by long indulgence; but pertinacity and time will overcome it. Nature delights and hastens to throw off all obstructions; and when once we have made a little way, we shall then proceed, *secundo flumine*, and be over-joyed at the recovery of our primitive, our proper disposition.

Besides, the ready assistances of God, who will facilitate our difficulties, assist us by his Wisdom, support us by his Power, and refresh us by the irradiations of his Love, till the Victory be obtained: and we, at last, triumph in that most Perfect and Eternal state of Bliss, which is prepared for those, *who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for Glory and Immortality.*

Rom. 2.

To

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To which, of his mercy, may he bring us all, for Jesus Christ his sake, the Righteous ; To whom, with the Father, and the blessed Spirit, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, Praise, Dominion and Obedience, now and for ever.

Amen.

F I N I S.

(100)

To whom it may concern,
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the above named matter. I am sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with the result of the investigation. I am, however, unable to do more than to state the facts as they appear to me. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours, very truly,
J. H. [Signature]



Witness my hand and seal this 10th day of [Month] 18[Year].

Very truly yours,

J. H. [Signature]

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